BRENDA STARR REPORTER®

By Dale Messick

The Collected Dailies and Sundays: 1940-1946

The Collected Dailies and Sundays: 1940-1946

HERMES PRESS
neshannock, pennsylvania

Copyright ©2012 Tribune Media Services, Inc. Brenda Starr© and Brenda Starr, Reporter® and © Tribune Media Services, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher.

Cover image: Brenda Starr based on an image by Dale Messick
Cover and book design by Daniel Herman
Louise Geer, Project Manager
First printing, 2012

Published by Hermes Press an imprint of Herman and Geer Communications, Inc.
2100 Wilmington Road
Daniel Herman, Publisher
Louise Geer, Vice President
Neshannock, Pennsylvania 16105
(724) 652-0511
www.HermesPress.com; info@hermespress.com

LCCN 2011940718
ISBN 1-932563-80-6
Image scanning and digital corrections by H + G Media and Louise Geer, Alissa Ross, and Troy Musquire
For Lillian Louise Vivoda Geer

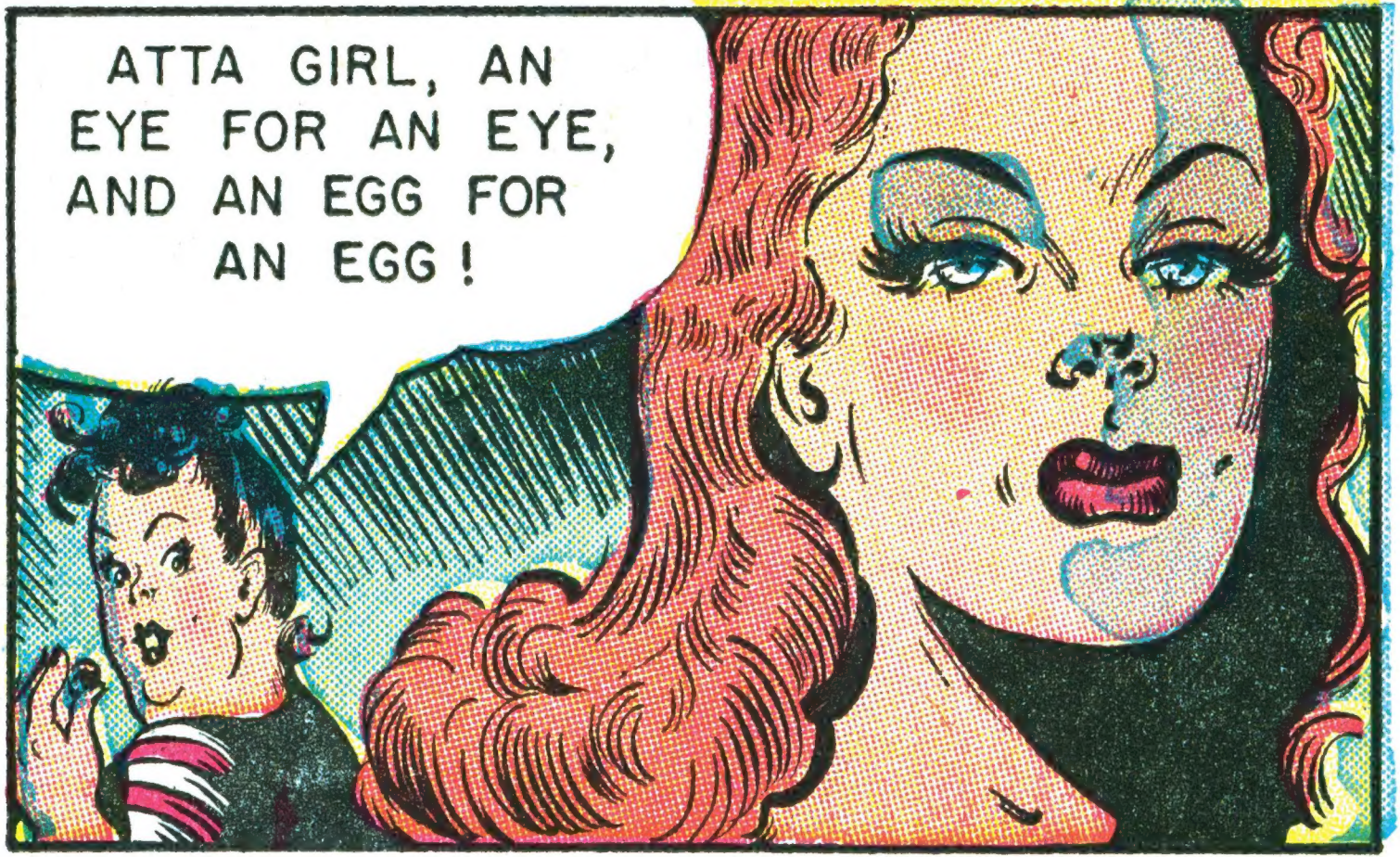
Acknowledgments

This book would not be possible without the help, cooperation, patience, and kindness of many people. First and foremost in making this endeavor possible are all the folks at Tribune Media Services: Stephen Tippie, Julie Josephitis, and Jan Guszynski . Additionally, Laura and Starr Rohman were kind enough to share their thoughts about their mother and grandmother with us found in the Foreword and Afterword of the book. Also, thanks to Trina Robbins for the informative essay about Dale which puts this wonderful strip and woman cartoonists in perspective. Finally, last but not least, to Richard Pietrzyk, who worked as Dale's assistant for many years, for providing us with valuable insights, original artwork, two of the essays in this volume, and with tireless help and assistance .

Printed in China

contents

4	Foreword	Brenda, Mom, and I
6	Introduction	Dale and Brenda: A Career in Newsprint
10	An Appreciation	*Brenda Starr*: A Ground Breaking Strip
16	Chapter 1	Beginning
104	Chapter 2	The Curious Tale of Mary Elizabeth Beastly
126	Chapter 3	The Man of Mystery
200	Process	Drawing and Coloring *Brenda Starr*
206	Afterword	My "Granny Dale"


ATTA GIRL, AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND AN EGG FOR AN EGG!

Foreword

Brenda, Mom, and I

Brenda Starr's mother and mine are one and the same. I was born two years after Brenda; my mom was thirty-six. Brenda was a hard act to follow, but as a pretty little girl named Starr, with blonde curly hair and big blue eyes, I more than held my own.

My mother was always at home; she divided her time between the drawing board in her studio and doing normal things around the house like cooking dinner. Another part of the daily routine was promoting Brenda and the strip – mom was always preparing to make a public appearance somewhere!

Especially memorable for me was before bed when mom would crawl in my crib with me and tell the best stories with a continuing chapter every night.

When I started school I soon found out that my mother was someone quite famous; I was more often than not introduced as "the daughter of Dale Messick who draws *Brenda Starr*." Trouble was I wanted to be just a normal kid, just a face in the crowd. Mom had other ideas though, wanting me to emulate her creation, as in some respects she tried to do. But, excuse the pun, that just wasn't in the stars.

Looking back after all the years it's now clear what a natural born entertainer and a great public speaker she was. She was born with artistic talent, a curious mind and a sharp eye and ear for a story. She took me along for the ride, literally, moving 50 times in her life as a self-described "gypsy." Dale Messick was one of a kind, a woman who never ceased to flower. A woman who stayed true to herself and inspired everyone who knew her.

—Starr Rohrman

Starr Rohrman is the only child of Dale Messick. Born in New York City in 1942, she moved all over the country in her mother's "BRENDA STARR ROLLING STUDIO" as a child. At age 9, she and her mother finally settled in Indiana where Starr completed her schooling, including graduating from Indiana University. After she married in 1965, she and her now ex-husband moved to Northern California where she's remained, living in the same house where she raised her two children. She spent her career working in human services with an emphasis in home care and cared for her mother in her later years. She's now retired and enjoying her unexpected new life as a grandma with two young grandchildren.

A CHARLTON PUBLICATION
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BRENDA STARR REPORTER
No 14
By Dale Messick
10¢
STOP THE PRESSES! I'VE GOT REAL NEWS!
CITY DESK
BRENDA STARR, YOUR FAVORITE REPORTER, IN ANOTHER COMPLETE SERIES OF THRILLING NEWS ADVENTURES.

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BRENDA STARR REPORTER
No 13
By Dale Messick
A CHARLTON PUBLICATION
10¢
PRESS
IN THIS ISSUE... BRENDA STARR IN A COMPLETE SERIES OF EXCITING AND ADVENTURE-PACKED ASSIGNMENTS.

Introduction

Dale and Brenda: A Career in Newsprint

June 1940, long lines of goose-stepping Nazi Storm Troopers were snaking through the Arc De Triomphe into Paris, impatient movie goers were lining up to see *Gone with the Wind*, and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill gave his finest speech. Amid this, an Indiana bred artist readied a comic strip on the exploits of a fiery red-haired journalist. Greeting card illustrator and storyteller Dalia (Dale) Messick was adding dialogue, shadow, and color to her new creation *Brenda Starr, Reporter*.

The funnies long had their share of leading men with Dick Tracy, Terry (*Terry and the Pirates*), Buck Rogers, and the Phantom but no leading women.

Dale Messick had always wanted to be a storyteller. While in grammar school during the First World War, she even created an early "comic" book featuring a heroine based on film actress Gloria Swanson, who leaves her staid home life to become a nurse in war-ravaged Europe. While there she is abducted by a shaved headed hun (an Erich Von Stroheim-esqe character). Through her pluck she is able to escape marriage to the villain, commandeer a tottering biplane, and fly off into the setting sun and safety. Receiving a positive response to her story from classmates, family and friends, Dale in time set her sights on the New York news syndicates. She came close to success with an early submission, *Streamline Babies*, which was canceled before it saw newsprint, only fueling Messick's desire to see her art on the comics pages. Various ideas were considered. A lady pirate (too much like the Dragon Lady), a bandit (bandits eventually get caught), and a…reporter!

Looking to Hollywood for inspiration, Messick based her reporter's look on actress Rita Hayworth – not so much a caricature as a likeness. Creating a comic strip is a bit like creating a film: a story, script, dialogue, locations and actors are needed to flesh out the work, with the cartoonist taking on all roles from costume designer to cameraman to director. First and foremost a title or name was needed.

One woman who received as much attention as any Hollywood personality and for doing much less was celebutant Brenda Diana Duff Frazier. Her fame rested solely on attending the crème de la crème of society functions and nightclub hopping. Frazier's given name fascinated Dale. "I had never heard the name before," the cartoonist said. Also, consider the name Brenda comes from the Scandinavian word meaning

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
CONGRATULATIONS, ARCH WARD! HERE'S HOPING I DO AS WELL IN 25 YEARS WITH THE TRIBUNE.
Dale Messick
CHICAGO TRIBUNE — NEW YORK NEWS SYNDICATE, Inc.
TRIBUNE TOWER, CHICAGO, ILL.
N. Y. NEWS BUILDING, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Previous page: covers for two *Brenda Starr* comic books published by Charlton Comics in 1955, left #14, right #13. Above: Dale Messick original artwork created for *Tribune* colleague Arch Ward. Right: cover for Dell Comics' *Brenda Starr, Reporter* #1, 1963. Opposite page: original Dale Messick artwork for the *Brenda Starr* daily from January 10, 1959.

flame or sword. Is there a better name for a red-haired journalist whose pen would be mightier than a sword? Finally add the surname of Starr because Brenda would be a star reporter.

The very undebutantlike reporter made her debut on June 30, 1940. The strip did not premiere in the regular comics section of the *Chicago Tribune* but in a special comic book supplement. Only appearing on Sunday, not in the daily paper (that would happen in 1945), in two complete discrete, separate sections composed of approximately 16 panels, which allowed ample space for story development. A cast of characters lent support in varying degrees to the career girl in her new position on *The Flash*. Muggs Walters, the gruff, abrasive news editor; his niece Daphne Dimples, blond, arrogant and already determined to get Brenda fired from the paper. Figures like Hank O'Hair, the tam-topped, red-haired chum of Brenda, and the mysterious orchid addict, Basil St. John, who would not be introduced until later in the strip's development (see Chapter 3 in this volume).

After years of effort, energy and determination Dale Messick finally had achieved her goal, to see a comic in print. Now came the real cliffhanger for the cartoonist — to fill each and every blank panel of every comic strip, every week with the adventures of *Brenda Starr, Reporter*.

—Richard Pietrzyk

Richard Pietrzyk worked on such classic comic strips as *Brenda Starr* and *Dick Tracy*. He has scripted stories for Archie Comics and *Katy Keene*. He also has photographed Hollywood celebrities from Elizabeth Taylor to Paul Newman to Bob Hope. When not cartooning or drawing eccentric characters, he teaches a new generation of young cartoonists.

WHAT SHE DOESN'T KNOW, IS THAT THE BODY HAS VANISHED!
VANISHED?

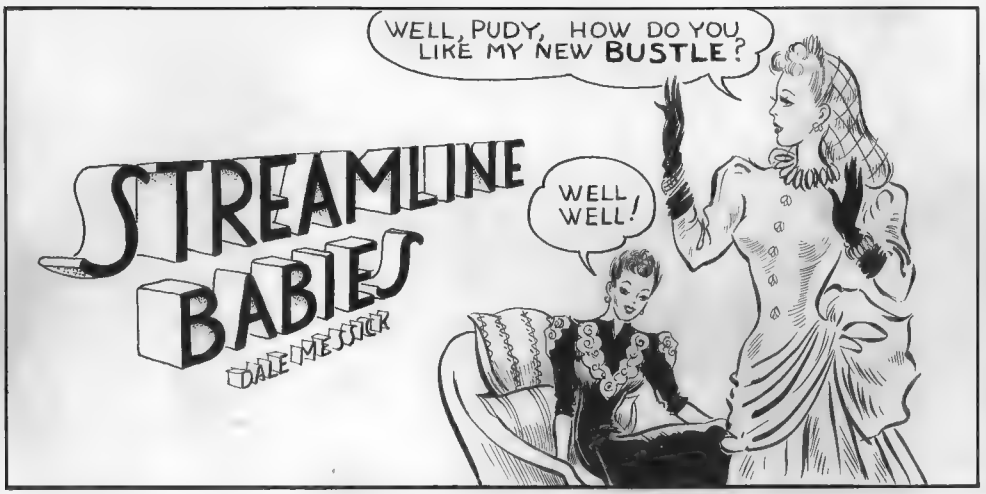
An Appreciation

Brenda Starr: A Ground Breaking Strip

Before she sold the long-lasting strip that was to make her the Grand Dame of comics, Dale Messick attempted to sell four others. Born Dalia Messick, the artist liked to relate that she had changed her name to the more sexually ambiguous Dale because when she was Dalia, editors would reject her strips and then put the make on her. The way she finally sold Brenda, she said in all her interviews, was to become Dale and mail the strips in. However, only the first of her unsold strips, *Weegee,* drawn probably in the mid-1920s, when the artist was just out of high school, is signed Dalia. The other three, all drawn during the 1930s, are already credited to her new name, Dale. So there must be another reason why they were rejected. It's certainly not the art. Even *Weegee,* Messick's first strip, is at least as well drawn as some of the flapper strips from the period, and better drawn than Harold Gray's *Little Orphan Annie,* which it seems partially inspired by. What makes *Weegee* different is the subject matter.

Comics by women were hardly a rarity in young Dale's day, and she may have grown up reading comics by Kate Carew, Inez Tribit, Margaret and Mary Hays, Katharine Price, Eliza Curtis, or the extremely prolific Grace Drayton, creator of the Campbell Kids. But her big inspiration was Nell Brinkley, who had come to New York from Colorado in 1907 to work for the Hearst syndicate. Her comics and commentary were syndicated in Hearst papers all over the United States. The innocently sexy "Brinkley Girls" she drew, dressed in stylish, exquisitely rendered and often revealing fashions, were wildly popular. The Ziegfeld Follies included an act with chorus girls dressed up as Brinkley Girls and she had at least three popular songs written about her. Women could buy Nell Brinkley Hair Wavers for ten cents a card. Fans, especially female ones, collected Brinkley's daily panels and her Sunday pages. Girls colored her black and white newspaper pictures and pasted them into scrapbooks. Numerous girls and young women, Dalia included, copied Neil Brinkley's art.

But all of the women cartoonists before Dale, even Brinkley, had stuck to subjects considered safe for women: cute animals and kids, pretty girls without a care in the world, round grandmas spouting homespun philosophy. These comics were considered "girl stuff"; a genre men didn't care to work in or take seriously. But *Weegee,* and Messick's later *Peg and Pudy,* and *Streamline Babies,* all feature Depression era heroines



born ahead of their time, working girls come to the big city to earn their living.

By the time she was drawing *Mimi the Mermaid,* Messick's style had improved immensely, but editors might have found her subject matter simply too weird. Messick must have liked the mermaid concept though, because in 1966 she returned to it with a Brenda Starr story arc about a mermaid.

With the creation of *Peg and Pudy, the Strugglettes,* it looked like Messick was finally getting somewhere. *Strugglettes* morphed into *Streamline Babies,* with the same characters and the same situations — two girls attempting to make it in the big city. By this point the main character was already a dead ringer for the future Brenda Starr.

At last it looked like the persistent artist had finally hit it; the McNaught syndicate showed an interest in her strip. But after Messick had completed three Sunday pages, the syndicate decided to go instead with an Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy strip. Comic editors appear to have always been a conservative lot, and even today will always buy a strip starring a licensed character rather than take a chance on an unknown. Messick remembers trying to be brave when she was told the news, but finally, unable to control herself, with tears running down her

cheeks, she told the editor that a comic about a wooden dummy would never last.

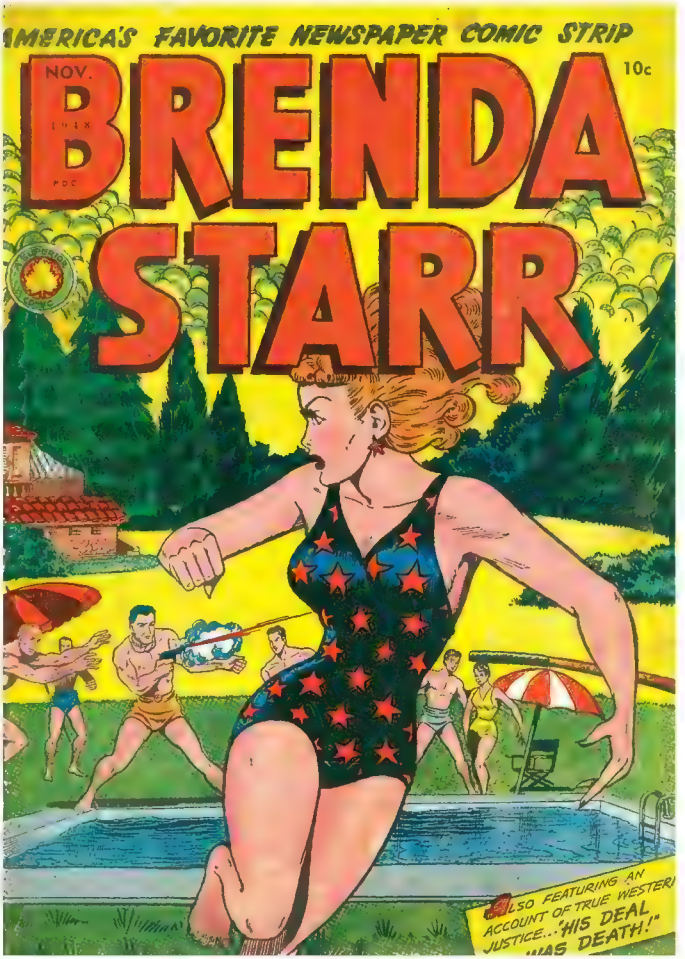
She was right; the strip folded within a month. But by that time, Dale Messick was busily creating the right strip for the right time.

America in 1940 was already gearing up for the war that was to come a year later. Movies, pulp fiction, and comics all echoed the action-oriented theme of war and preparing for war. The country was ready for a strong, action-oriented heroine, and Dale Messick was there with Brenda Starr, her red-haired, starry-eyed girl reporter. Messick's sample strips had been submitted to Captain Joseph Patterson, publisher of the *New York Daily News* and chief of the Chicago Tribune-New York News syndicate, and rejected by him. The reason given, according to a 1960 article in *The Saturday Evening Post,* was that "He had tried a woman cartoonist once… and wanted no more of them." Mollie Slott, at the time Patterson's "Girl Friday," and later vice president of the syndicate, found the discarded samples and recognized the potential in them. The heroine, whose looks were inspired by film star Rita Hayworth and who was named after the glamorous debutante Brenda Frazier, had originally been a "girl bandit." Heeding Slott's advice, the artist turned her into a reporter.

Patterson grudgingly agreed to carry *Brenda Starr* in his syndicate but flatly refused to run it in the *Daily News.* The News didn't carry *Brenda Starr* until two years after Patterson's death in 1946.

Patterson was not the only male to have it in for Messick's creation. The artist never felt fully accepted by her male colleagues. As the *Saturday Evening Post* delicately put it when referring to the male cartoonists'

Opposite page: original Dale Messick artwork for *Streamline Babies*. Right: cover for an early comic book version of the strip, issue #5, November, 1948. The strip proved to be so popular that it inspired a number of product tie-ins.


AMERICA'S FAVORITE NEWSPAPER COMIC STRIP
NOV.
10c
BRENDA STARR
ALSO FEATURING AN ACCOUNT OF TRUE WESTERN JUSTICE..."HIS DEAL, HIS DEATH!"

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH BRENDA THESE DAYS?
YOU GOT ME, TAYLOR
SHE REALLY HASN'T BEEN HERSELF SINCE SHE STARTED ADVICE-TO-THE-LOVELORN...
GOSH! BRENDA NEEDS ACTION AND EXCITEMENT. THIS JOB IS JUST TOO TAME!
BRENDA STARR
...AND NEVER HAVING HAD ANY TROUBLE IN HER OWN LOVE LIFE..... HOW CAN SHE POSSIBLY SYMPATHIZE WITH THOSE WHO HAVE!
WHAM
NOW, WHAT DID I SAY THAT SHOULD CAUSE THIS?
HEY, TAYLOR! YOU BETTER STOP TEASING BRENDA..... YA WANTA GET HER REALLY MAD?
I'M GETTIN' OUT OF HERE WHILE THE GETTIN'S GOOD
DEAR ADVICE-TO-THE-LOVELORN: MY JOEY HAS TOLD ME MANY TIMES THAT HE LOVES ME AND ME ALONE. BUT LAST NIGHT I FOUND A RED HAIR ON HIS COAT. DO YOU THINK A MAN PREFERS RED HAIR?
Dale Messick
JUNE 1
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.

Left: U.S. movie poster "one" sheet for Chapter 8 of the *Brenda Starr* serial produced by Columbia in 1945. Right: original Dale Messick artwork for half of the Sunday strip from June 1, 1941, the first year of the continuity.

attitudes, "There are differences of opinions about her artistic talents." In a 1973 interview, Messick wryly gave her opinion of the mostly male National Cartoonists Society: " I see where they're honoring Jack Dempsey. They never honored me for anything, but they're honoring Jack Dempsey."

Why this negativity aimed at Messick and her creation by the men in the industry? Messick's style is romantic and feminine, and there's plenty of romance in the strips, yet *Brenda Starr* is an action strip. Brenda almost freezes to death on snow-covered slopes, and gets marooned on desert islands. In one 1957 story arc, the flame-haired girl reporter is tossed into the Amazon to be eaten by piranhas, then is drugged and placed into a canoe to drift to her death – and survives. In 1958, she is kidnapped by a mad botanist, who plans to choke out the world's food supply with his mutant morning glory plants. In 1961, a competitive girl reporter plots to take Brenda out of the running by shooting her and blaming the murder on a whole *other* girl reporter, Lois Lane, she doesn't need a superhero to rescue her. As she had done before when she dared to introduce real working girls to the safe world of women's comics, Messick was being subversive. She was trespassing on male territory in her own feminine style, and the guys didn't like it.

But the women did! When the *Tucson Daily Citizen* dropped the strip in 1973, the editors received hundreds of angry letters and phone calls, most of which were from women. As they had with Nell Brinkley's strips, girls and women copied Dale's strips and pasted them into scrapbooks. And as much as her fans loved Brenda, Dale loved her creation even more.

The magic of comics is that the creator can play god, or goddess, and can turn their fantasies into reality. If you wish for a teenage boy to get bitten by a radioactive spider and gain superpowers, you have but to draw it to make it come true. Tarpe Mills, who created Miss Fury, the second action heroine in newspaper strips (Brenda Starr was the first), put herself into her strip by creating a heroine who looked just like her. Dale Messick put her strip into *herself*. If she couldn't parachute out of planes, battle hijackers on the high seas, go undercover to join teen girl gangs, she could – and did – dye her hair the same shade of red as Brenda, and garb herself in outfits that were as glamorous as those she designed for her heroine. She was already in her late eighties when she had a photo taken of herself in black leather on a motorcycle, mailing it off as a Christmas card to all her fans.

A year before Wonder Woman made her debut, Messick opened the door to action heroines in comics, and comics would never be the same.

— Trina Robbins

Award-winning herstorian and writer **Trina Robbins** is considered the expert on the subject of early 20th century women cartoonists, and is responsible for rediscovering many brilliant but previously-forgotten women, including Golden Age cartoonist Lily Renee, and the great Nell Brinkley. Her full-color book, *The Brinkley Girls: the Best of Nell Brinkley's Cartoons from 1913-1940,* published in April, 2009, was nominated for an Eisner award and a Harvey award. Her most recent book is *Tarpe Mills and Miss Fury*, a collection of five years' worth of Sunday strips by Mills. A graphic novel biography of Lily Renee, *Lily Renee Escape Artists,* scripted by Robbins, will be published in November, 2011.

Brenda Starr Reporter®

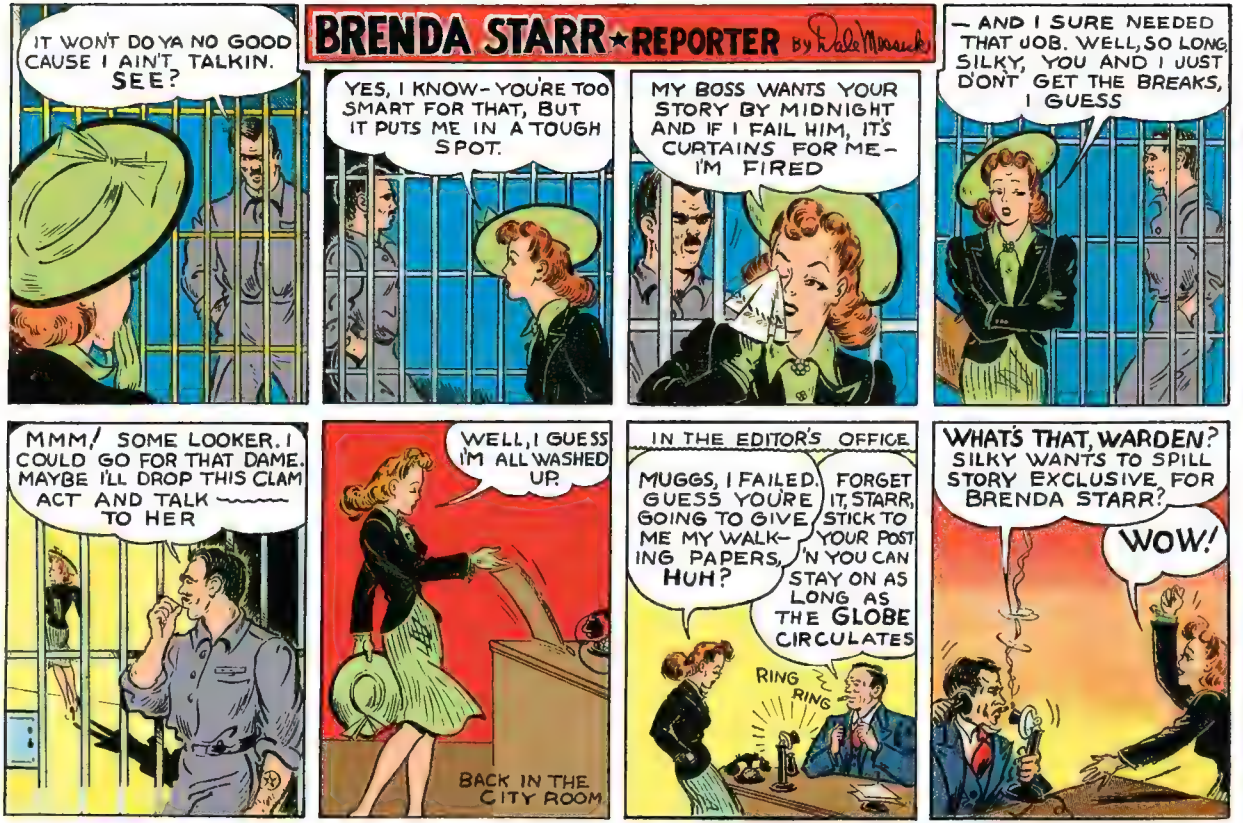
Chapter One: Beginning

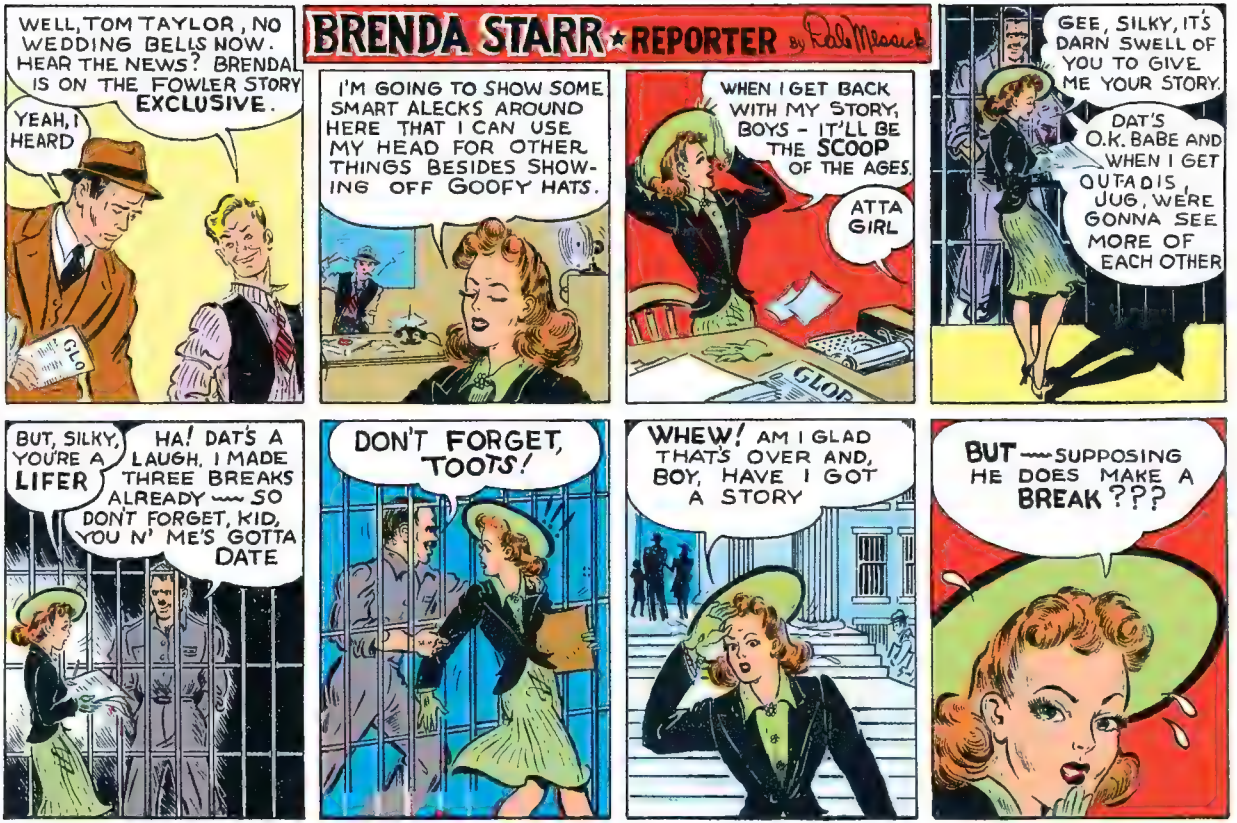
A Note about the Format of the *Brenda Starr* strips The *Brenda Starr* strip premiered on June 30, 1940. The strip was designed in a vertical or tabloid form and ran in a self-contained comic book section included with the Sunday *Chicago Tribune*. The strip was and has been featured with one half on the top and the other half on the bottom or, as with this chapter, with one half of the strip on the left and the other on the right. Subsequently the strip ran as a "half page" in a horizontal format. In 1945 a daily version of the strip was added. The opposite page features the cast of characters from *Brenda Starr* from a piece prepared for the Sunday *Chicago Tribune* "Graphic Section" of January 15, 1945. **This Chapter: Sunday strips from June 30, 1940 through April 20, 1941.**

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
HAIL HAIL THE GANG'S ALL HERE!
PESKY
TOM
ABRETHA
HANK
PROFESSOR SQUEEM
NEAL MANN
THE BOSS
DETECTIVE TRAVERTS
DAPHNE
VINELLA DEVINE
TULA of ZUBU
LARRY
KILLER
THE NURSE
TORNADO
SIBERIA
DR. PIERRE
AUNTIE MANN
SENOR BITE-SO
JACK STARR
GOODY
FLURY SNOW

Beginning
BRENDA STARR Reporter
By Dale Messick
HO-HUM, BIRTH AND DEATH NOTICES ARE ALL I EVER GET TO SUPPLY THE GLOBE WITH WHAT I'D REALLY LIKE TO GET MY TEETH IN—
IS A STORY WITH SOME REAL MEAT IN IT!
HOW YA, BRENDA, DAY-DREAMIN' AGAIN?
HOW'S OUR LITTLE GLOBE-TROTTER TODAY?
I'VE HAD JUST ABOUT ENOUGH OF YOUR WISE-CRACKS! I'M FED UP ON THIS SISSY STUFF-
GEE! THE HURRICANE'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THE CHIEF'S OFFICE
SHE HASN'T RED HAIR FOR NOTHING
— AND, MR. MUGGS WALTER, IF YOU DON'T GIVE ME A REAL STORY, I'M THROUGH —
?
O.K., STARR, YOUR TANTRUMS ARE WEARING ME DOWN—I WANT SILKY FOWLER'S STORY BY MIDNIGHT
SILKY FOWLER? NO REPORTER IN TOWN'S HAD ANY LUCK WITH THAT GUY. HE WON'T TALK!
YOU ASKED FOR IT — NOW GET THAT STORY OR YOU'RE FIRED!

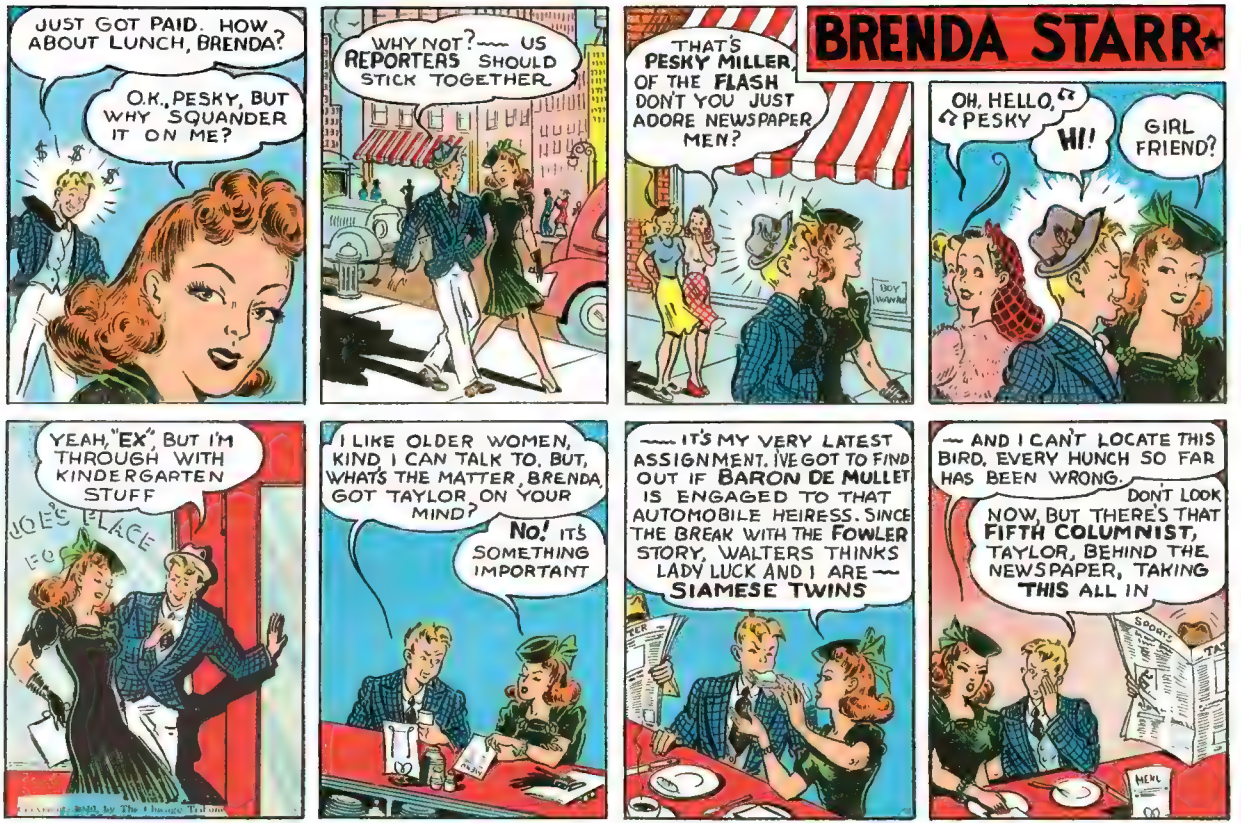
Continuing
BRENDA STARR Reporter
By Dale Messick
SO - MUGGS WALTERS THINKS I CAN'T GET SILKY FOWLER'S STORY— WELL, I'LL SHOW HIM
DUCK! HERE COMES THAT RED-HEADED BOMBSHELL
BANG
HA - DID YOU HEAR THAT? THE BOSS IS SENDING BRENDA STARR OUT TO TACKLE SILKY FOWLER— FAT CHANCE—
EVER REPORTER IN TOWN HAS HAD A TRY AT HIM
YEAH? WELL THAT AIN'T SO FUNNY - BOY, IF I WERE IN THAT GUY'S PLACE, I'D BE A PUSHOVER FOR HER
GLOBE
NOW LISTEN, BRENDA, HONEY, YOU CAN'T COPE WITH A TOUGH LIKE SILKY. CALL IT OFF AND FOR THE MILLIONTH TIME WILL YA MARRY ME?
NO!
MY MIND'S MADE UP— BRENDA ALWAYS GETS HER MAN!
AND HOW!
I'M STARR, REPORTER ON THE GLOBE AND HERE TO GET SILKY FOWLER'S STORY
O.K. MISS, BUT THAT MUG WON'T OPEN UP.
WANTED
HE'S IN THE CELL AFTER THE EMPTY ONE—
BRENDA, BABY, HERE GOES— KEEP YOUR FINGERS CROSSED -
SILKY FOWLER? I'M BRENDA STARR - REPORTER
YEAH! THEN GET OUTA HERE!
WILL BRENDA GET HER STORY?


BRENDA STARR ★ REPORTER By Dale Messick
IT WON'T DO YA NO GOOD CAUSE I AIN'T TALKIN. SEE?
YES, I KNOW- YOU'RE TOO SMART FOR THAT, BUT IT PUTS ME IN A TOUGH SPOT.
MY BOSS WANTS YOUR STORY BY MIDNIGHT AND IF I FAIL HIM, IT'S CURTAINS FOR ME- I'M FIRED
— AND I SURE NEEDED THAT JOB. WELL, SO LONG, SILKY, YOU AND I JUST DON'T GET THE BREAKS, I GUESS
MMM! SOME LOOKER. I COULD GO FOR THAT DAME. MAYBE I'LL DROP THIS CLAM ACT AND TALK TO HER
WELL, I GUESS I'M ALL WASHED UP.
BACK IN THE CITY ROOM
IN THE EDITOR'S OFFICE
MUGGS, I FAILED. GUESS YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE ME MY WALKING PAPERS, HUH?
FORGET IT, STARR, STICK TO YOUR POST 'N YOU CAN STAY ON AS LONG AS THE GLOBE CIRCULATES
RING RING
WHAT'S THAT, WARDEN? SILKY WANTS TO SPILL STORY EXCLUSIVE FOR BRENDA STARR?
WOW!


WELL, TOM TAYLOR, NO WEDDING BELLS NOW. HEAR THE NEWS? BRENDA IS ON THE FOWLER STORY EXCLUSIVE.
YEAH, I HEARD
BRENDA STARR ★ REPORTER by Dale Messick
I'M GOING TO SHOW SOME SMART ALECKS AROUND HERE THAT I CAN USE MY HEAD FOR OTHER THINGS BESIDES SHOWING OFF GOOFY HATS.
WHEN I GET BACK WITH MY STORY, BOYS - IT'LL BE THE SCOOP OF THE AGES.
ATTA GIRL
GEE, SILKY, IT'S DARN SWELL OF YOU TO GIVE ME YOUR STORY.
DAT'S O.K. BABE AND WHEN I GET OUTA DIS JUG, WE'RE GONNA SEE MORE OF EACH OTHER
BUT, SILKY, YOU'RE A LIFER
HA! DAT'S A LAUGH. I MADE THREE BREAKS ALREADY — SO DON'T FORGET, KID, YOU N' ME'S GOTTA DATE
DON'T FORGET, TOOTS!
WHEW! AM I GLAD THAT'S OVER AND, BOY, HAVE I GOT A STORY
BUT — SUPPOSING HE DOES MAKE A BREAK ???

BRENDA STARR ★ REPORTER by Dale Messick
GEE, BRENDA, I KNEW YOU'D GET THAT STORY
ER— WATCHA DOIN TONIGHT?
WRITING MY FIRST BIG STORY
IT AIN'T GOING TO TAKE YOU ALL NIGHT, IS IT?
I'M AFRAID SO, PESKY, DARLIN'
TICK TICK
AW GEE! YOU'VE ALWAYS GOT SOME EXCUSE
BEAT IT, PESKY, BRENDA ONLY DATES BIG TOUGH GUYS LIKE ~~~~ SILKY FOWLER!
?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
LISTEN, BRENDA, I BEAT YOU TO IT AND HID IN THAT EMPTY CELL NEXT TO SILKY IT WAS TOO BIG A STORY FOR YOU TO MUFF
WHY, YOU! -?!!!

LOOK OUT—— STARR'S ON THE WAR PATH AGAIN
BRENDA STARR ★ REPORTER By Dale Messick
OF ALL THE LOW, DIRTY TRICKS, I'LL NEVER DATE YOU AGAIN, TOM TAYLOR,— LET ALONE MARRY YOU
GEE, BRENDA, I DID IT TO PROTECT YOU. SILKY FOWLER'S A DANGEROUS CRIMINAL. NO TELLING WHAT HE MIGHT DO
THAT'S A LIKELY STORY YOU'VE NEVER BEEN MUCH HELP BUT, TO PULL A THING LIKE THIS AT MY FIRST BIG CHANCE_! I SUP. POSE YOUR STORY'S ALREADY IN?
I'M THROUGH WITH YOU, NOW, GET OUT OF HERE!
O.K., HONEY, IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL—THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH WOMEN_NO SENSE OF HUMOR
YOU WILL STEAL LITTLE GIRL'S STORIES! NOW, MAYBE THERE'S A CHANCE FOR ME
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune

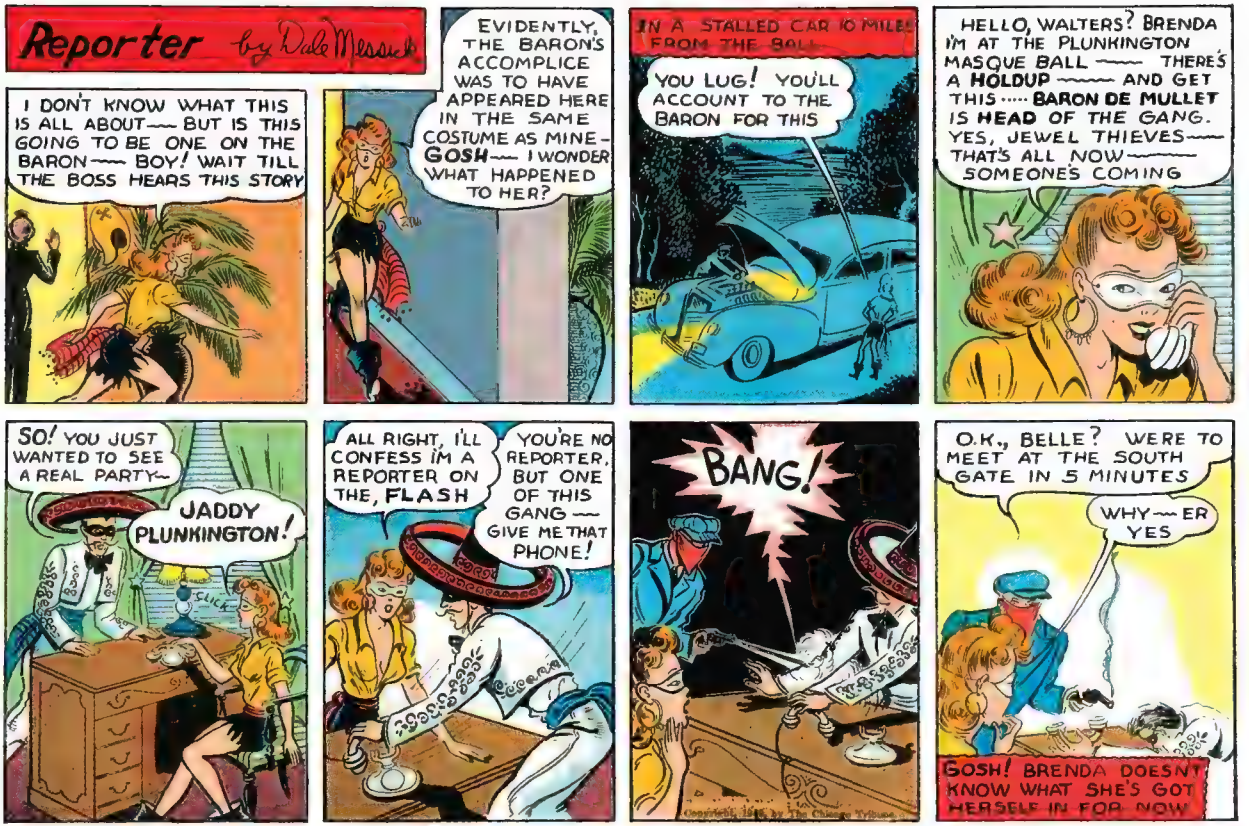

JUST GOT PAID. HOW ABOUT LUNCH, BRENDA?
O.K., PESKY, BUT WHY SQUANDER IT ON ME?
WHY NOT?— US REPORTERS SHOULD STICK TOGETHER
BRENDA STARR
THAT'S PESKY MILLER, OF THE FLASH DON'T YOU JUST ADORE NEWSPAPER MEN?
OH, HELLO, PESKY
HI!
GIRL FRIEND?
YEAH, "EX", BUT I'M THROUGH WITH KINDERGARTEN STUFF
JOE'S PLACE
I LIKE OLDER WOMEN, KIND, I CAN TALK TO. BUT, WHAT'S THE MATTER, BRENDA, GOT TAYLOR ON YOUR MIND?
No! IT'S SOMETHING IMPORTANT
— IT'S MY VERY LATEST ASSIGNMENT. I'VE GOT TO FIND OUT IF BARON DE MULLET IS ENGAGED TO THAT AUTOMOBILE HEIRESS. SINCE THE BREAK WITH THE FOWLER STORY, WALTERS THINKS LADY LUCK AND I ARE — SIAMESE TWINS
— AND I CAN'T LOCATE THIS BIRD, EVERY HUNCH SO FAR HAS BEEN WRONG.
DON'T LOOK NOW, BUT THERE'S THAT FIFTH COLUMNIST, TAYLOR, BEHIND THE NEWSPAPER, TAKING THIS ALL IN
SPORTS
MENU

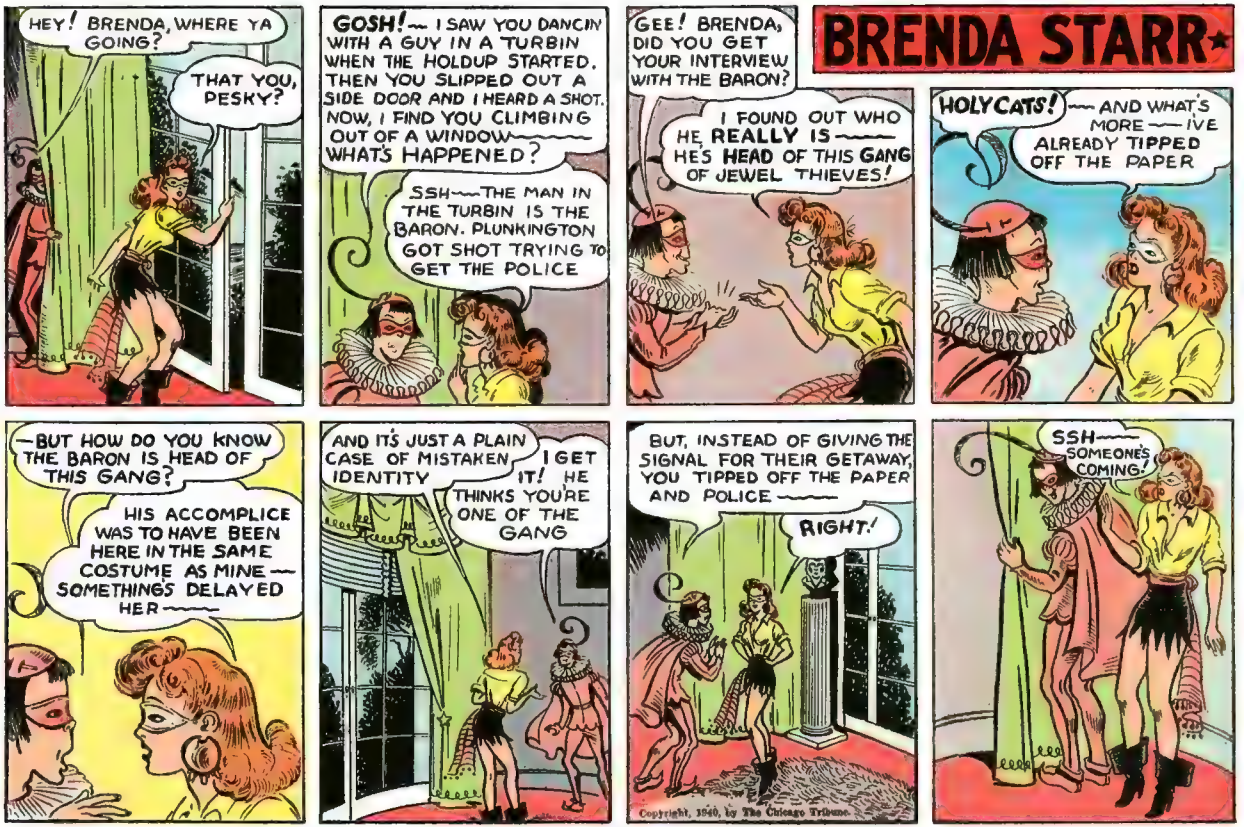
REPORTER by Dale Messick
MAY I OFFER MY ASSISTANCE? I KNOW WHERE TO FIND... THE BARON
YOU WOULD
TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT, BUT, THAT IS WHY WOMEN ARE LOUSY REPORTERS—TOO BUSY NURSING THEIR PERSONAL GRUDGES
WOW! WHATA WOMAN
LATER— IN THE CITY ROOM
NO ANSWER? ADDRESS UNKNOWN? THAT MAN MUST BE A MYTH!
ANYBODY HERE KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT BARON DE MULLET?
NOPE! THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM
YOU GOT THE FOWLER STORY WITHOUT OUR HELP
THIS WILL PROVE IF YOUVE GOT THE STUFF, OR IF YOURE JUST A FLASH IN THE PAN
PROOF OF THE PUDDING, -YA KNOW
I KNOW WHERE YOU CAN FIND HIM, REMEMBER?
IT'S A PUT UP JOB. YOURE IN CAHOOTS WITH THE BOSS JUST TO GET MY GOAT— YOU— !!
HOLD IT— YOU LITTLE DEVIL, YOU WANT TO GET THIS STORY, DONT YOU? WELL— POUR YOURSELF INTO A COSTUME AND BE READY AT 9:30
WILL BRENDA TAKE HIS TIP?

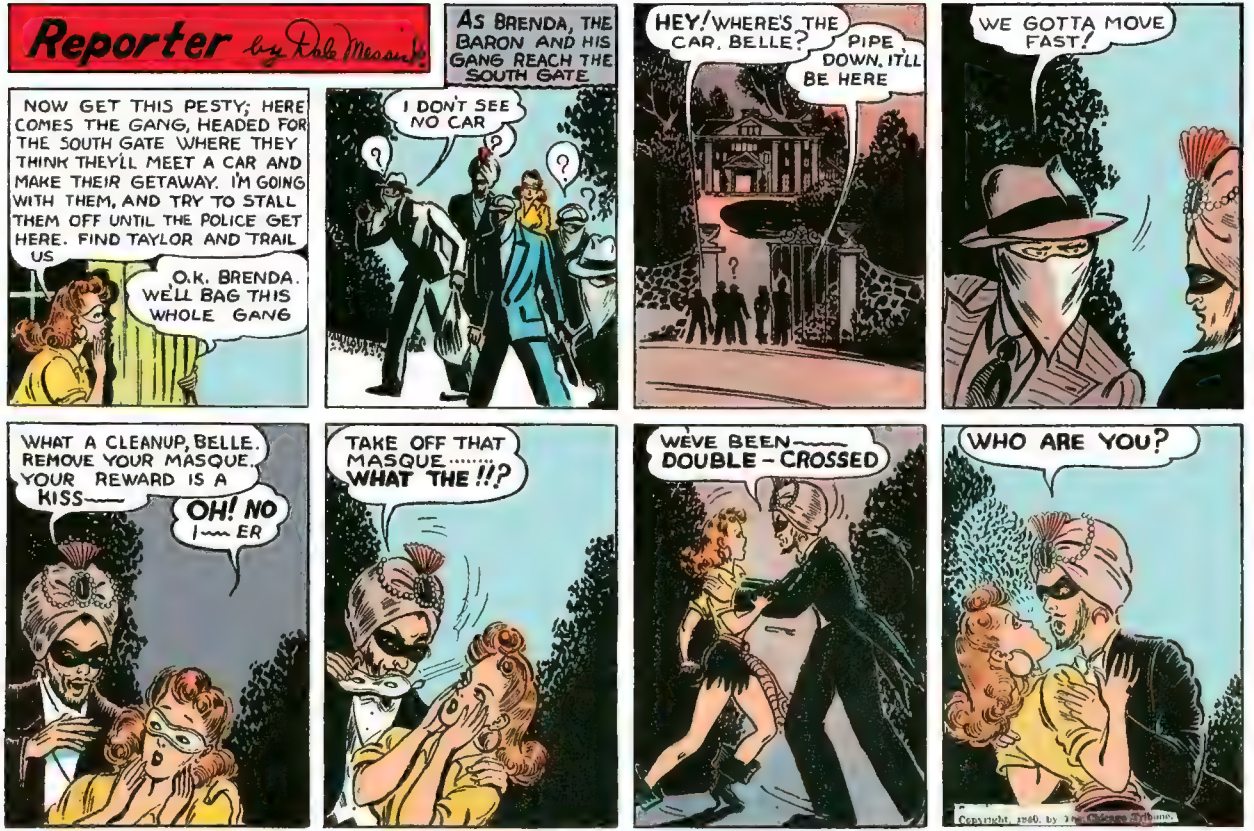
ALTHOUGH STILL ANGRY WITH TAYLOR, BRENDA IS COMPELLED TO ACCEPT HIS AID AND ATTEND A MASQUE BALL. THERE, HE PROMISES SHE WILL FIND THE BARON, AND GET HER STORY -
THIS SHINDIG IS AT THE PLUNKINGTON ESTATE— REAL CLASS
AW, GEE, HONEY. LET'S KISS AND MAKE UP
CUT THE ROMANCE — THIS IS STRICTLY BUSINESS
— AND BY THE WAY, HOW WE GOING TO CRASH THIS PARTY?
JUST LEAVE IT TO ME, HONEY. I'M AN OLD HAND AT THIS SORT OF THING
BRENDA STARR
INVITATIONS, PLEASE?
COUNTESS, YOU HAVE THEM
PST— SIR, THEY HAVE NO INVITATIONS
REAHLY?
I'M SORRY
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, JEEVES, THE COUNTESS AND I ARE OLD FRIENDS — YOU LOOK SIMPLY RAVISHING
?
SO SORRY — COUNT NO-GET-IN-SKI. HOPE YOUR INVITATION TURNS UP
?

REPORTER by Dale Messick
WELL, COUNTESS —— WHAT'S THE MYSTERY?
WHY — ER
THINK FAST, BRENDA
I'M NOT REALLY A COUNTESS, JUST LITTLE JOAN SMITH— WHO'D LOVE TO SEE A REAL PARTY JUST ONCE—
— AND MAY I THANK YOU, SENOR —— ER—
JADDY— HEIR TO THE PLUNKINGTON FORTUNE
OH!... DOES THAT MEAN EXIT FOR ME?
WHAT LUCK
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
NO, INDEED — FOR ONE SO BEAUTIFUL, YOU SHOW SPIRIT, AND IT'LL BE A PLEASURE TO SHOW YOU THE PLACE. LETS DANCE
OH! THANK YOU, MR. PLUNKINGTON
JADDY, TO YOU, MY DEAR
OH, OH, GOTTA WATCH THIS BABY!
?
HOW YA, BRENDA?
WHO ON EARTH?—— IF PLUNKINGTON FINDS OUT I'M A REPORTER, I'M SUNK!
LOOK AGAIN, BRENDA

BRENDA, OUT ON AN ASSIGNMENT TO INTERVIEW BARON DE MULLET, CRASHES THE FASHIONABLE PLUNKINGTON MASQUE BALL——
SO YOU WOULD LIKE TO MEET A REAL BARON? WAIT HERE
HEY!, BRENDA——
PESKY! WHAT A RELIEF——BUT HOW'D YOU GET IN HERE?——
BRENDA STARR
I THOUGHT, WISE GUY TAYLOR WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT KNEW ABOUT THE BARON
HA! TAYLOR AINT SO SMART
O.K. ROMEO, BEAT IT HERE COMES PLUNKINGTON AND THE BARON—— AND MY STORY—— I HOPE
I AM CHARMED. MAY I HAVE THIS DANCE?
OH! BARON, DELIGHTED
DID YOU HAVE TO USE PLUNKINGTON TO GET IN HERE—— AND WHY THE INTRODUCTION?
?
Copyright, 1940 by The Chicago Tribune.
ALL RIGHT, FOLKS WE'RE COLLECTIN' DA ICE—— DIS IS A HOLDUP
OH!
HELP!
EEK!
O.K. BELLE, GET GOING THE PHONE IS IN THE FOYER
HUH?


Reporter by Dale Messick
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT—— BUT IS THIS GOING TO BE ONE ON THE BARON—— BOY! WAIT TILL THE BOSS HEARS THIS STORY
EVIDENTLY, THE BARON'S ACCOMPLICE WAS TO HAVE APPEARED HERE IN THE SAME COSTUME AS MINE— GOSH—— I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?
IN A STALLED CAR 10 MILES FROM THE BALL
YOU LUG! YOU'LL ACCOUNT TO THE BARON FOR THIS
HELLO, WALTERS? BRENDA I'M AT THE PLUNKINGTON MASQUE BALL —— THERE'S A HOLDUP —— AND GET THIS ····· BARON DE MULLET IS HEAD OF THE GANG. YES, JEWEL THIEVES—— THAT'S ALL NOW—— SOMEONE'S COMING
SO! YOU JUST WANTED TO SEE A REAL PARTY—
JADDY PLUNKINGTON!
CLICK
ALL RIGHT, I'LL CONFESS I'M A REPORTER ON THE, FLASH
YOU'RE NO REPORTER, BUT ONE OF THIS GANG —— GIVE ME THAT PHONE!
BANG!
O.K., BELLE? WERE TO MEET AT THE SOUTH GATE IN 5 MINUTES
WHY—— ER YES
GOSH! BRENDA DOESN'T KNOW WHAT SHE'S GOT HERSELF IN FOR NOW


HEY! BRENDA, WHERE YA GOING?
THAT YOU, PESKY?
GOSH!— I SAW YOU DANCIN WITH A GUY IN A TURBIN WHEN THE HOLDUP STARTED. THEN YOU SLIPPED OUT A SIDE DOOR AND I HEARD A SHOT. NOW, I FIND YOU CLIMBING OUT OF A WINDOW— WHAT'S HAPPENED?
SSH— THE MAN IN THE TURBIN IS THE BARON. PLUNKINGTON GOT SHOT TRYING TO GET THE POLICE
GEE! BRENDA, DID YOU GET YOUR INTERVIEW WITH THE BARON?
BRENDA STARR
I FOUND OUT WHO HE, REALLY IS— HE'S HEAD OF THIS GANG OF JEWEL THIEVES!
HOLY CATS!
— AND WHAT'S MORE — I'VE ALREADY TIPPED OFF THE PAPER
—BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW THE BARON IS HEAD OF THIS GANG?
HIS ACCOMPLICE WAS TO HAVE BEEN HERE IN THE SAME COSTUME AS MINE— SOMETHINGS DELAYED HER—
AND IT'S JUST A PLAIN CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY
I GET IT! HE THINKS YOU'RE ONE OF THE GANG
BUT, INSTEAD OF GIVING THE SIGNAL FOR THEIR GETAWAY, YOU TIPPED OFF THE PAPER AND POLICE—
RIGHT!
SSH— SOMEONE'S COMING!
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune.


Reporter by Dale Messick
AS BRENDA, THE BARON AND HIS GANG REACH THE SOUTH GATE
NOW GET THIS PESTY; HERE COMES THE GANG, HEADED FOR THE SOUTH GATE WHERE THEY THINK THEY'LL MEET A CAR AND MAKE THEIR GETAWAY. I'M GOING WITH THEM, AND TRY TO STALL THEM OFF UNTIL THE POLICE GET HERE. FIND TAYLOR AND TRAIL US
O.K. BRENDA. WE'LL BAG THIS WHOLE GANG
I DON'T SEE NO CAR
HEY! WHERE'S THE CAR, BELLE?
PIPE DOWN, IT'LL BE HERE
WE GOTTA MOVE FAST!
WHAT A CLEANUP, BELLE. REMOVE YOUR MASQUE. YOUR REWARD IS A KISS——
OH! NO I——ER
TAKE OFF THAT MASQUE……. WHAT THE!!?
WE'VE BEEN—— DOUBLE-CROSSED
WHO ARE YOU?
Copyright 1960, by The Chicago Tribune

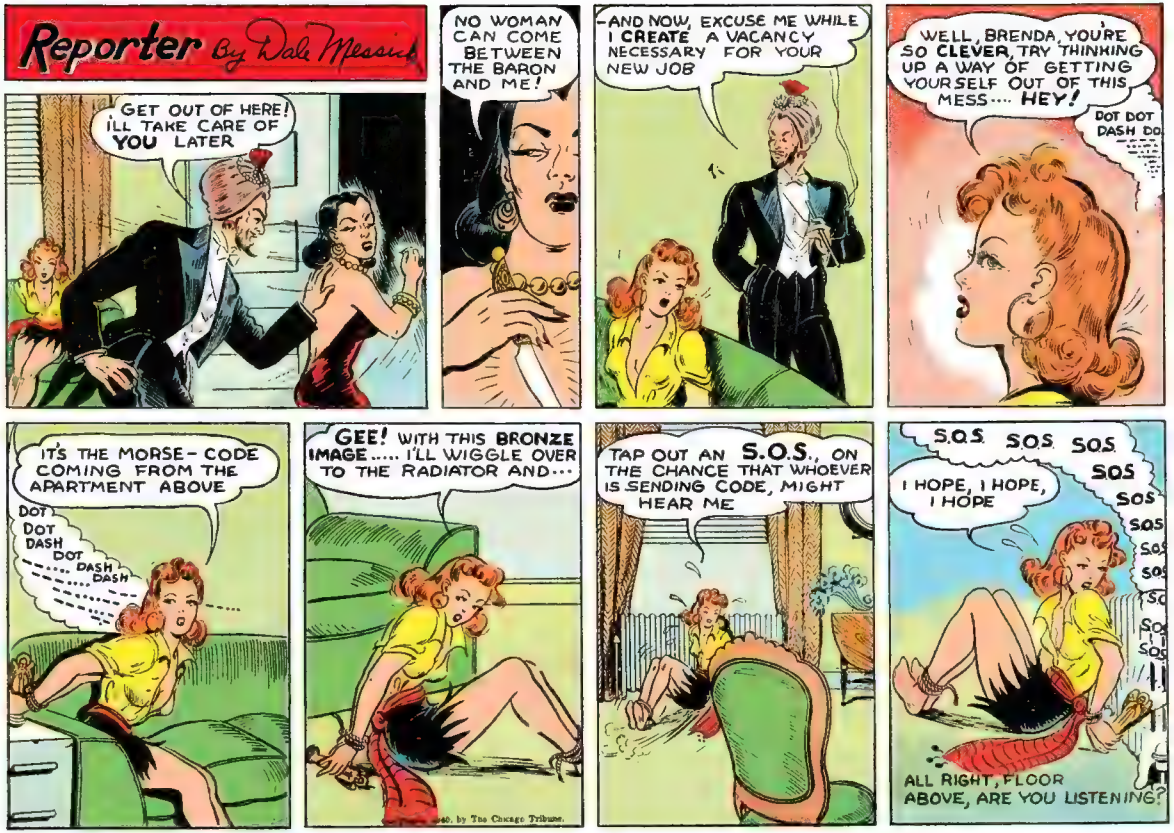
BRENDA, DRESSED AS A PIRATE, CRASHED THE BALL TO INTERVIEW THE "GREAT" BARON DE MULLET ONLY TO DISCOVER HE'S THE HEAD OF A GANG OF JEWEL THIEVES THE BARON HAS MISTAKEN BRENDA FOR HIS WOMAN ACCOMPLICE, WHO IS ALSO IN PIRATE COSTUME ....HE SUDDENLY BECOMES SUSPICIOUS .....
WHAM
TAKE OFF THAT MASK!
IN THE MEANTIME
BOY, OH BOY! YA GOTTA HAND IT TO BRENDA, SHE'S DARN CLEVER
PESKY, LOVE STRUCK OFFICE BOY, GOES TO GET TAYLOR, BRENDA'S REPORTER BOY FRIEND, WHO IS .....
HEY! TAYLOR WAKE UP. WE GOTTA TRAIL BRENDA!
BRENDA STARR
OH HUM —— PESKY! WHAT YOU DOING HERE?
.... WAITING IN A CAB OUTSIDE .....
WE GOTTA TRAIL BRENDA. SHE'S WITH A GANG A JEWEL THIEVES
?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
OH, YES! I FORGOT YOU BEEN COOLIN' YOUR HEELS OUT HERE AND DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING....
—SURE, I BEEN WAITING OUT HERE UNTIL BRENDA GOT HER INTERVIEW WITH BARON DE MULLET, YOU KNOW HOW PEEVED SHE WAS BECAUSE I BROKE IN ON HER FOWLER STORY—— SO I'M LETTING HER HANDLE THIS ONE ALONE —— WHAT'S THIS ABOUT JEWEL THIEVES?
IT'S LIKE THIS—
.... AND NOW SHE'S GONE TO THE SOUTH GATE WITH THEM AND WE'RE SUPPOSE TO TRAI——
HAVE YOU GONE NUTS? YOU LET BRENDA WALK RIGHT INTO A TRAP —— SHE'S IN DANGER, WE ——
—HAVE NO TIME TO LOOSE COME ON!
WELL! GOSH, IT WAS HER IDEA

Reporter By Dale Messick
WELL, SOME OF HER IDEAS ARE SURE WACKY
SHE DOESN'T KNOW THE MEANING OF FEAR——
SHE'S TOO DUMB TO BE AFRAID
TAKE THAT BACK, TAYLOR! YOU CAN'T TALK LIKE THAT ABOUT BRENDA—ILL
NOW, LISTEN, SMALL FRY, THIS IS NO TIME TO ARGUE—BRENDA'S IN DANGER AND IT'S UP TO US TO RESCUE HER—
WELL, ALRIGHT—SAY! THIS MUST BE THE SOUTH GATE——
DO YOU SEE ANYONE?
NOT A SOUL
EEEEEEEEE
WHAT'S THAT?
SOUNDS LIKE POLICE SIRENS
IT'S THE POLICE, ALRIGHT. BUT WHERE'S THE GANG?—MUST HAVE MADE THEIR GETAWAY
YES——BUT WHERE'S BRENDA? GOSH! YOU DON'T SUPPOSE THEY——
WAIT—WHAT'S THAT——?
IT'S—IT'S BRENDA'S WHITE MASK
THEN, THEY KNOW NOW THAT SHE IS NOT THEIR ACCOMPLICE

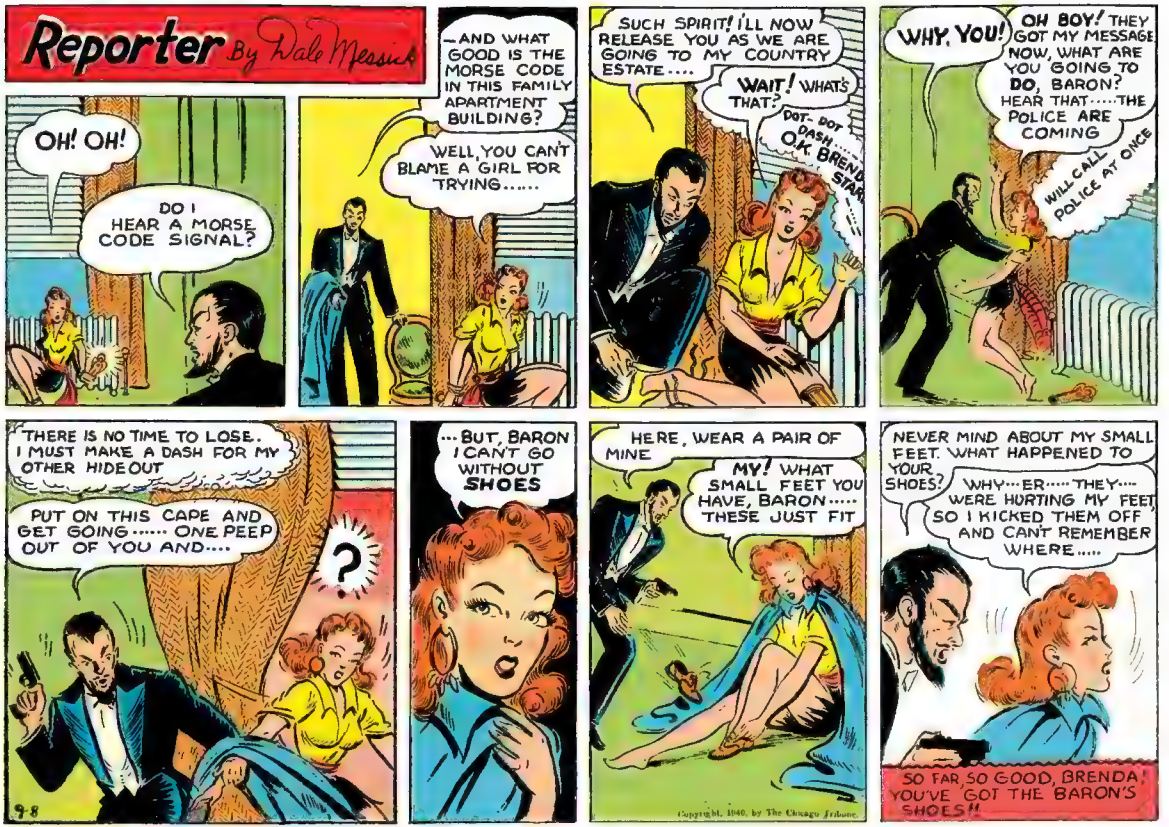
AT A FANCY DRESS BALL, BRENDA FALLS INTO THE HANDS OF BARON DE MULLET, WHOM SHE HAS DISCOVERED TO BE THE HEAD OF A GANG OF JEWEL THIEVES.....
PESKY, IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE MADE THEIR GETAWAY TAKING BRENDA WITH THEM
IT'S HERS, ALL RIGHT. WHAT'LL WE DO?
WHO ARE YOU?
I'M TAYLOR, REPORTER ON THE FLASH
ME TOO— THE PRESS
OFFICER, YOU BETTER HAVE YOUR MEN SURROUND THE PLACE..... THEY HAVENT HAD TIME TO GO FAR——
BRENDA STARR
IN A DITCH NEAR THE SOUTH GATE.....
I'LL TAKE THE ICE. NOW YOU MEN SCATTER. GET BACK TO THE HIDEOUT AS BEST YOU CAN
WHAT ABOUT DA DAME?
I'LL TAKE CARE OF HER. NOW SCRAM
O.K., BARON
!!
HALT!
BARON!
BELLE!
I GOT HERE THE SAME TIME THE POLICE DID, SO I KNEW SOMETHING HAD GONE WRONG..... I HAD WILLIE PULL THE CAR INTO A CLUMP OF BUSHES..... AND CAME ON AHEAD—— SAY!——

Reporter By Dale Messick
WHO'S THE DAME? SHE'S GOT ON THE SAME OUTFIT AS MINE ~~~
YES, THAT'S WHAT QUEERED THE JOB..... I THOUGHT SHE WAS YOU
WITH THAT RED HAIR —— WHO IS SHE?
DON'T KNOW, SHE WOUNDN'T TALK. HAD TO K.O. HER BEFORE SHE GAVE AN ALARM
THINK WE COULD GET HER TO THE CAR?
WE CAN TRY. BUT WHY LUG HER WITH US?
I GOT MY REASONS
SSSH! LAY LOW. SOMEONE'S COMING
BOY! WE'VE COMBED THIS WHOLE PLACE. WHAT WE NEED IS A COUPLE OF BLOOD HOUNDS
HERE'S THE CAR TAKE IT EASY
A COOL HUNDRED GRAND. NOT BAD FOR A NIGHT'S WORK. LADY LUCK WAS WITH ME ~~~ HUM— BEAUTIFUL LITTLE WITCH WONDER WHO SHE IS .....
WHAT IS THE BARON GOING TO DO WITH BRENDA?

READ ALL ABOUT IT! BARON DE MULLET..... KIDNAPS BRENDA STARR
DAILY-FLASH EXTRA
DE MULLET, FAKE
BEAUTIFUL REPORTER KIDNAPED
ANY NEWS YET?
NOPE
THE CITY ROOM OF THE FLASH IS BURIED IN GLOOM
ON THE CARPET IN THE CHIEF'S OFFICE
BRENDA STARR
TAYLOR, YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE COVERING THE SAME STORY.... WHAT WERE YOU DOING ALL THAT TIME?
DEF
STARR IS A REAL TROOPER. SHE GOT AN EXCLUSIVE STORY FOR THE FLASH, EXPOSING BARON DE MULLET AS A JEWEL THIEF —— IT'S UP TO THE PAPER TO GET HER BACK..... AND I WANT ACTION!
SO! THAT'S WHY YOU PLAYED UP TO ME AT THE MASQUE BALL.... A REPORTER! VERY CLEVER OF YOU TO EXPOSE ME AS A JEWEL THIEF. NO DOUBT YOU'LL GET A NICE BONUS FROM YOUR PAPER WHEN YOU GET BACK..... HA!
PARTY REVOLT
IN AN APARTMENT IN THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY, WHERE BRENDA IS BEING HELD CAPTIVE .....
WELL.... YOU'LL NEVER GET BACK. YOU HAVE EXPOSED MY GAME —— SO NOW I'M FORCED TO CREATE A NEW ONE —— AND, WITH YOUR HELP....
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU'RE GOING TO REPLACE BELLE, MY ACCOMPLICE. SHE WILL NEVER MUFF ANOTHER JOB....
NO!
OH! BARON, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME?

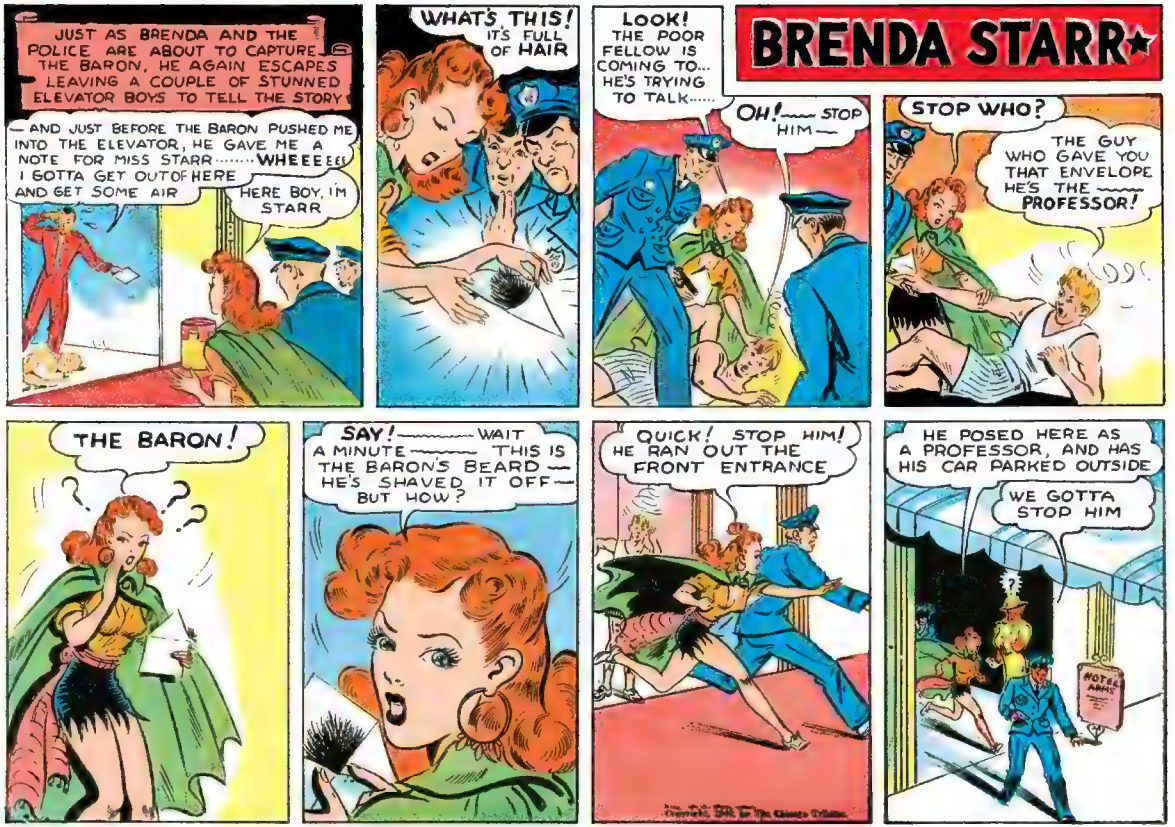

Reporter By Dale Messick
GET OUT OF HERE! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU LATER
NO WOMAN CAN COME BETWEEN THE BARON AND ME!
-AND NOW, EXCUSE ME WHILE I CREATE A VACANCY NECESSARY FOR YOUR NEW JOB
WELL, BRENDA, YOU'RE SO CLEVER, TRY THINKING UP A WAY OF GETTING YOURSELF OUT OF THIS MESS.... HEY!
DOT DOT DASH DO
IT'S THE MORSE-CODE COMING FROM THE APARTMENT ABOVE
DOT
DOT
DASH
DOT
DASH
DASH
GEE! WITH THIS BRONZE IMAGE..... I'LL WIGGLE OVER TO THE RADIATOR AND...
TAP OUT AN S.O.S., ON THE CHANCE THAT WHOEVER IS SENDING CODE, MIGHT HEAR ME
S.O.S. S.O.S. S.O.S.
S.O.S.
I HOPE, I HOPE, I HOPE
ALL RIGHT, FLOOR ABOVE, ARE YOU LISTENING?

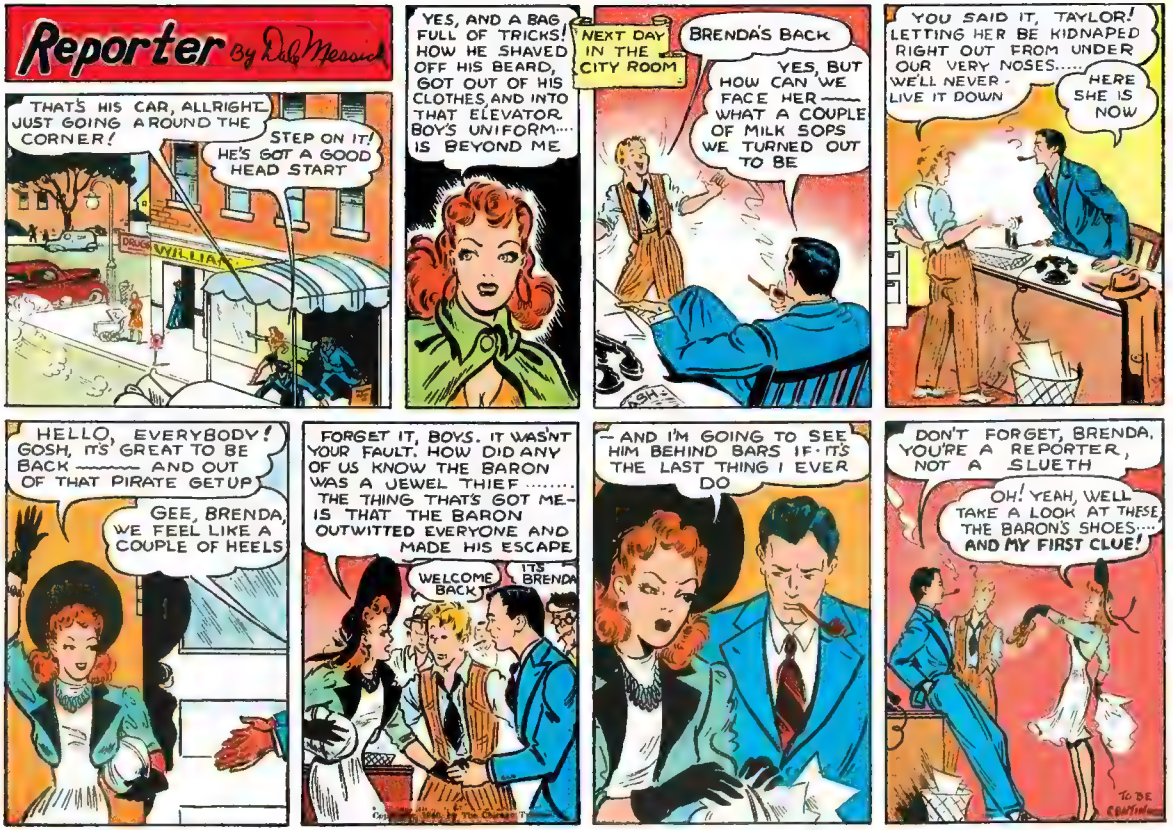
BRENDA STARR
BRENDA, TIED AND HELD CAPTIVE IN THE BARON'S APARTMENT. HEARS A..... DOT···DASH CODE FROM THE FLOOR ABOVE
DOT-DOT-DASH-
WITH THIS BRONZE IMAGE I'LL TAP OUT AN S.O.S. ON THE CHANCE THAT IT MIGHT BE HEARD
S.O.S. S.O.S.
LITTLE BOBBIE BLUE, A BEDRIDDEN INVALID, THRILLED WITH HIS NEW RADIO SENDING SET
THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR NAP
AW GEE! HOW CAN I EVER BE A EXPERT IF I DON'T PRACTICE
DOT DOT DASH
RADIO
GOSH, A NAP! A GUY CAN'T SLEEP ALL THE TIME. RIGHT NOW THERE MIGHT BE A SHIP IN DISTRESS···OR··· OR SOMEONE IN THE CLUTCHES OF A GANGSTER··· OR A.....
WHAT'S THAT?
S.O.S. S.O.S.
RADIO
WHY! IT'S AN S.O.S. AND IT'S COMING FROM THE RADIATOR..... GOSH!
S.O.S.
MOTHER! NURSE COME QUICK——
S.O.S. S.O.S.
GEE! I'LL GET MY NOTE BOOK AND TAKE DOWN THE MESSAGE···IF THERE IS ONE···MOTHER!
S.O.S. S.O.S.
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
WHAT IS IT, SON?
AN S.O.S. COMING FROM THE RADIATOR! GEE,..... HERE COMES THE MESSAGE ..... BRENDA·····STARR····· REPORTER··· HELD···· CAPTIVE···· FLOOR BELOW NOTIFY··· THE FLASH
DOT DOT DASH
HERE'S THE MESSAGE, MOTHER. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
IT'S EXTRAORDINARY. I READ ABOUT THIS REPORTOR BEING KIDNAPED JUST THIS MORNING


Reporter By Wale Messick
OH! OH!
DO I HEAR A MORSE CODE SIGNAL?
—AND WHAT GOOD IS THE MORSE CODE IN THIS FAMILY APARTMENT BUILDING?
WELL, YOU CAN'T BLAME A GIRL FOR TRYING.....
SUCH SPIRIT! I'LL NOW RELEASE YOU AS WE ARE GOING TO MY COUNTRY ESTATE....
WAIT! WHAT'S THAT?
DOT- DOT DASH.... O.K. BRENDA STAR
WHY, YOU!
OH BOY! THEY GOT MY MESSAGE NOW, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, BARON? HEAR THAT.....THE POLICE ARE COMING
WILL CALL POLICE AT ONCE
THERE IS NO TIME TO LOSE. I MUST MAKE A DASH FOR MY OTHER HIDEOUT
PUT ON THIS CAPE AND GET GOING..... ONE PEEP OUT OF YOU AND....
?
9-8
...BUT, BARON I CAN'T GO WITHOUT SHOES
HERE, WEAR A PAIR OF MINE
MY! WHAT SMALL FEET YOU HAVE, BARON..... THESE JUST FIT
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
NEVER MIND ABOUT MY SMALL FEET. WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR SHOES?
WHY...ER.....THEY.... WERE HURTING MY FEET SO I KICKED THEM OFF AND CAN'T REMEMBER WHERE.....
SO FAR, SO GOOD, BRENDA, YOU'VE GOT THE BARON'S SHOES!!

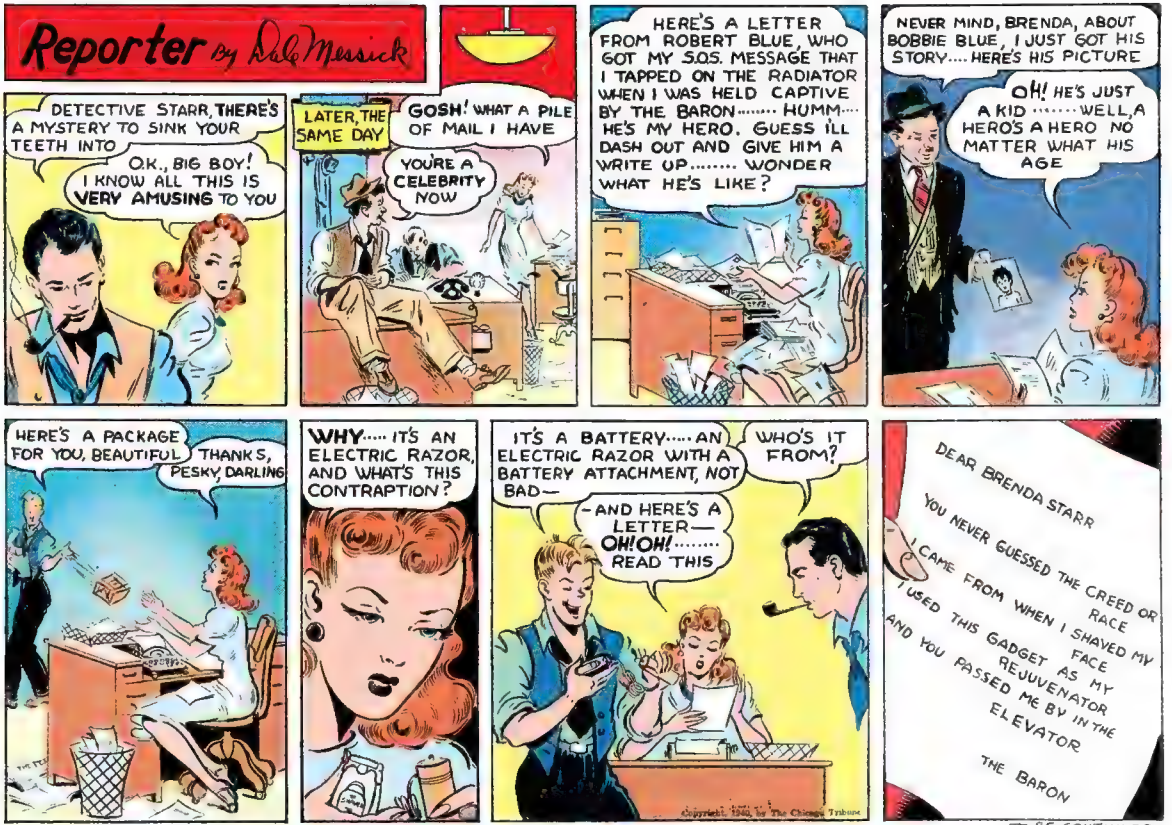
BRENDA STARR★
BRENDA, OUT TO CAPTURE THE BARON, IS HERSELF CAUGHT IN A TRAP
VERY CLEVER OF YOU TO TAP OUT AN S.O.S. MESSAGE ON THE RADIATOR. AH! BUT IT GIVES THE "GREAT" BARON A CHANCE TO MAKE ANOTHER DARING ESCAPE.....
GOING DOWN
YOUR CAR IS WAITING, PPOFESSOR
HUMM..... SO HE'S KNOWN HERE AS A PROFESSOR
GOOD, MY LAD
REMEMBER, IT WILL BE VERY BAD FOR YOU.... TO UTTER A SOUND
MAIN FLOOR
THE POLICE!
AU REVOIR, LITTLE REPORTER..... I'LL SEE YOU LATER
LOOK OUT!
ARE YOU HURT, MISS STARR?
STOP HIM! HE'S THE BARON
BANG
DON'T BOTHER ABOUT ME. THE OTHER ELEVATOR IS OUT OF ORDER.....TAKE THE STAIRS....YOU BOYS WILL HAVE TO STEP ON IT IF YOU'RE GOING TO CAPTURE THAT BABY..... GET THE ENGINEER TO TURN OFF THE POWER.... WE'LL TRAP HIM BETWEEN FLOORS
HAVE THE JANITOR TURN OFF THE POWER. POLICE ORDER!

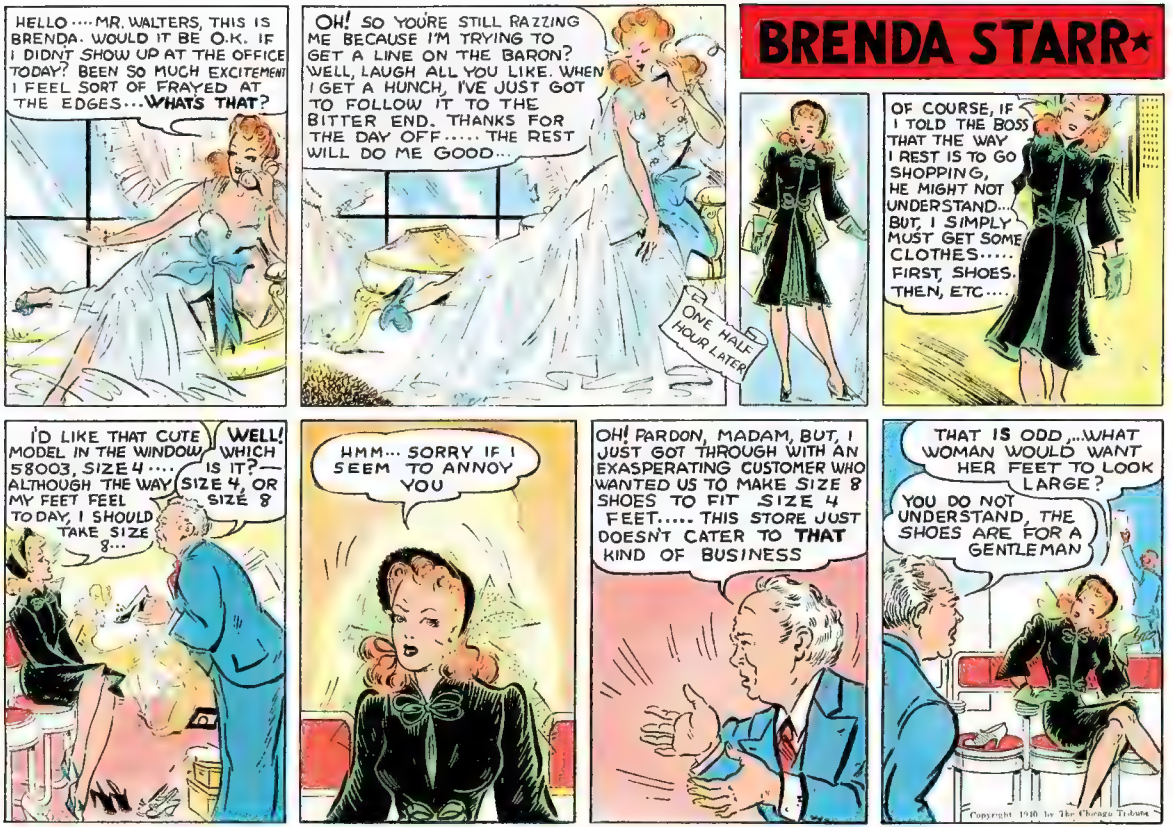
Reporter by Dale Messick
WHAT FLOOR DID THE ELEVATOR STOP ON?
BETWEEN THE 7TH AND 8TH FLOORS
DUGGAN,.... PUT AN ARMED MAN ON EACH FLOOR..... THEN TURN THE POWER ON.... AND NO MATTER WHICH FLOOR HE TRIES TO ESCAPE FROM ——
O.K., CHIEF. WE'LL NAB HIM,
WE'LL WAIT HERE IN THE LOBBY
DO YOU HEAR ANYTHING YET?
YEP, SHE'S MOVING ALLRIGHT, COMING DOWN
BE READY TO GRAB HIM HE'S A SMOOTH CUSTOMER
20 MINUTES LATER
HE'S GONE! WHAT HAPPENED?
WHO ARE YOU?
? ?
WELL, I WAS WAITING ON THE 8TH FLOOR FOR THE ELEVATOR—WHEN IT STOPPED, THE DOOR OPENED AND OUT JUMPED A BEARDED GUY WITH A GUN. HE PUSHED ME INTO THE ELEVATOR AND TOLD ME TO GET GOING OR HE'D BLOW MY HEAD OFF——
—— THEN I FOUND BUD, HERE, OUT COLD, MINUS HIS CLOTHES. I STARTED THE ELEVATOR DOWN —— AND THEN THE POWER DIED... OH, YES! HE GAVE ME THIS TO GIVE TO MISS STARR
?
.....AND HE STILL HAD TIME TO SEND BRENDA A NOTE!

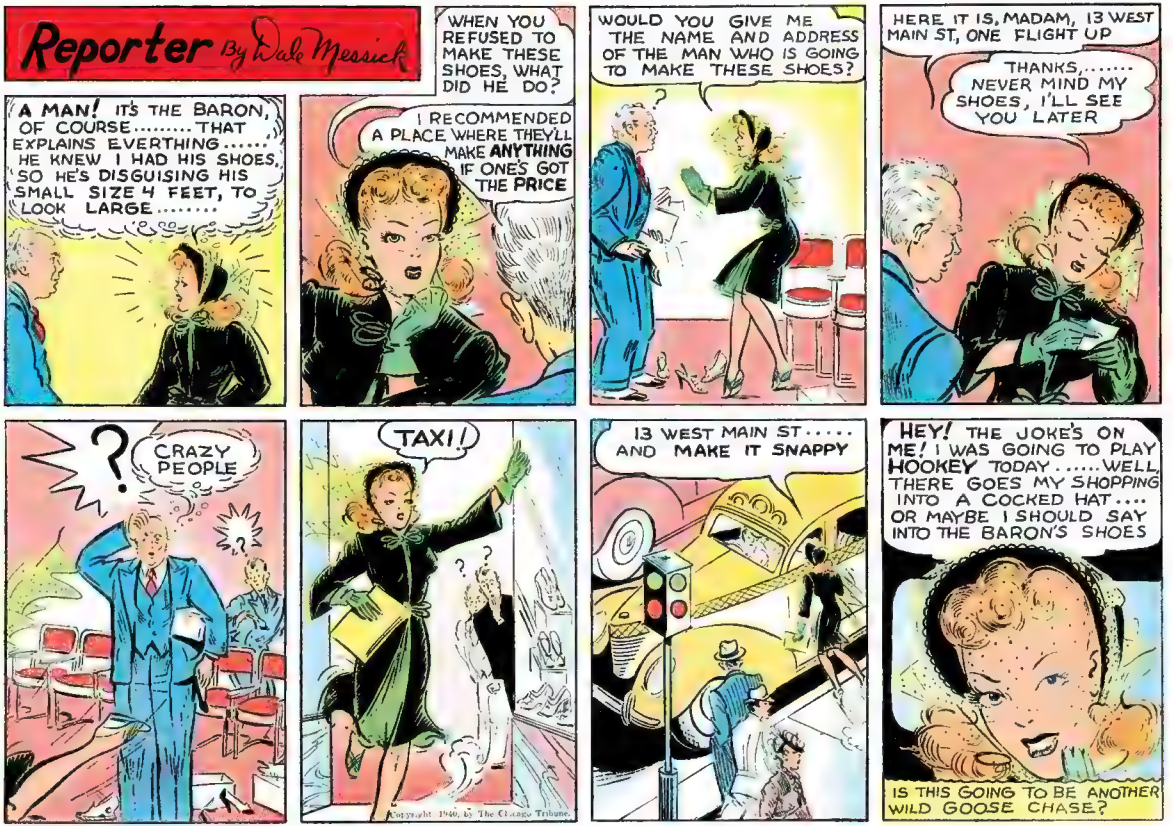

JUST AS BRENDA AND THE POLICE ARE ABOUT TO CAPTURE THE BARON, HE AGAIN ESCAPES LEAVING A COUPLE OF STUNNED ELEVATOR BOYS TO TELL THE STORY
— AND JUST BEFORE THE BARON PUSHED ME INTO THE ELEVATOR, HE GAVE ME A NOTE FOR MISS STARR..... WHEEEEE! I GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE AND GET SOME AIR
HERE BOY, I'M STARR
WHAT'S THIS! IT'S FULL OF HAIR
LOOK! THE POOR FELLOW IS COMING TO... HE'S TRYING TO TALK.....
OH!— STOP HIM—
BRENDA STARR
STOP WHO?
THE GUY WHO GAVE YOU THAT ENVELOPE HE'S THE — PROFESSOR!
THE BARON!
SAY!——— WAIT A MINUTE——— THIS IS THE BARON'S BEARD — HE'S SHAVED IT OFF— BUT HOW?
QUICK! STOP HIM! HE RAN OUT THE FRONT ENTRANCE
HE POSED HERE AS A PROFESSOR, AND HAS HIS CAR PARKED OUTSIDE
WE GOTTA STOP HIM

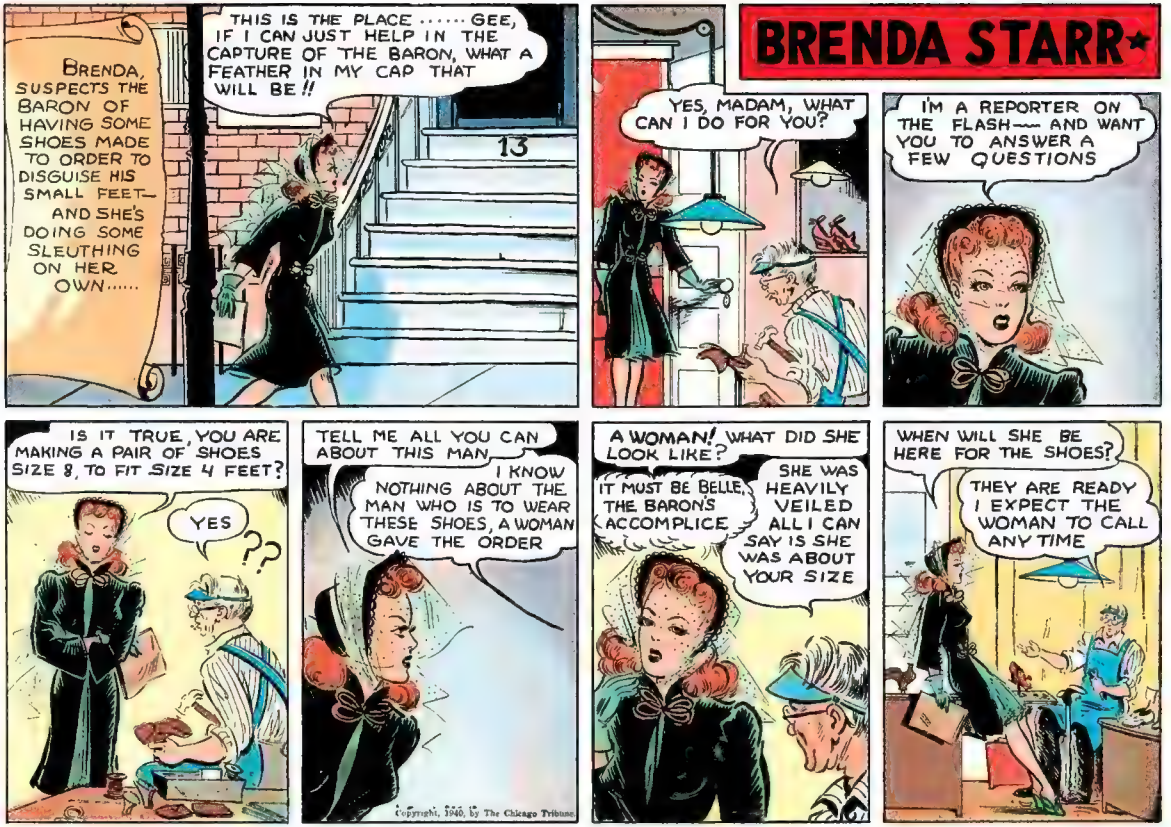

Reporter By Dick Messick
THAT'S HIS CAR, ALLRIGHT. JUST GOING AROUND THE CORNER!
STEP ON IT! HE'S GOT A GOOD HEAD START
DRUG
YES, AND A BAG FULL OF TRICKS! HOW HE SHAVED OFF HIS BEARD, GOT OUT OF HIS CLOTHES, AND INTO THAT ELEVATOR BOY'S UNIFORM.... IS BEYOND ME
NEXT DAY IN THE CITY ROOM
BRENDA'S BACK
YES, BUT HOW CAN WE FACE HER — WHAT A COUPLE OF MILK SOPS WE TURNED OUT TO BE
YOU SAID IT, TAYLOR! LETTING HER BE KIDNAPED RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER OUR VERY NOSES..... WE'LL NEVER LIVE IT DOWN
HERE SHE IS NOW
HELLO, EVERYBODY! GOSH, IT'S GREAT TO BE BACK — AND OUT OF THAT PIRATE GETUP
GEE, BRENDA, WE FEEL LIKE A COUPLE OF HEELS
FORGET IT, BOYS. IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT. HOW DID ANY OF US KNOW THE BARON WAS A JEWEL THIEF..... THE THING THAT'S GOT ME — IS THAT THE BARON OUTWITTED EVERYONE AND MADE HIS ESCAPE
WELCOME BACK
IT'S BRENDA
— AND I'M GOING TO SEE HIM BEHIND BARS IF IT'S THE LAST THING I EVER DO
DON'T FORGET, BRENDA, YOU'RE A REPORTER, NOT A SLUETH
OH! YEAH, WELL TAKE A LOOK AT THESE, THE BARON'S SHOES.... AND MY FIRST CLUE!
TO BE CONTINUED

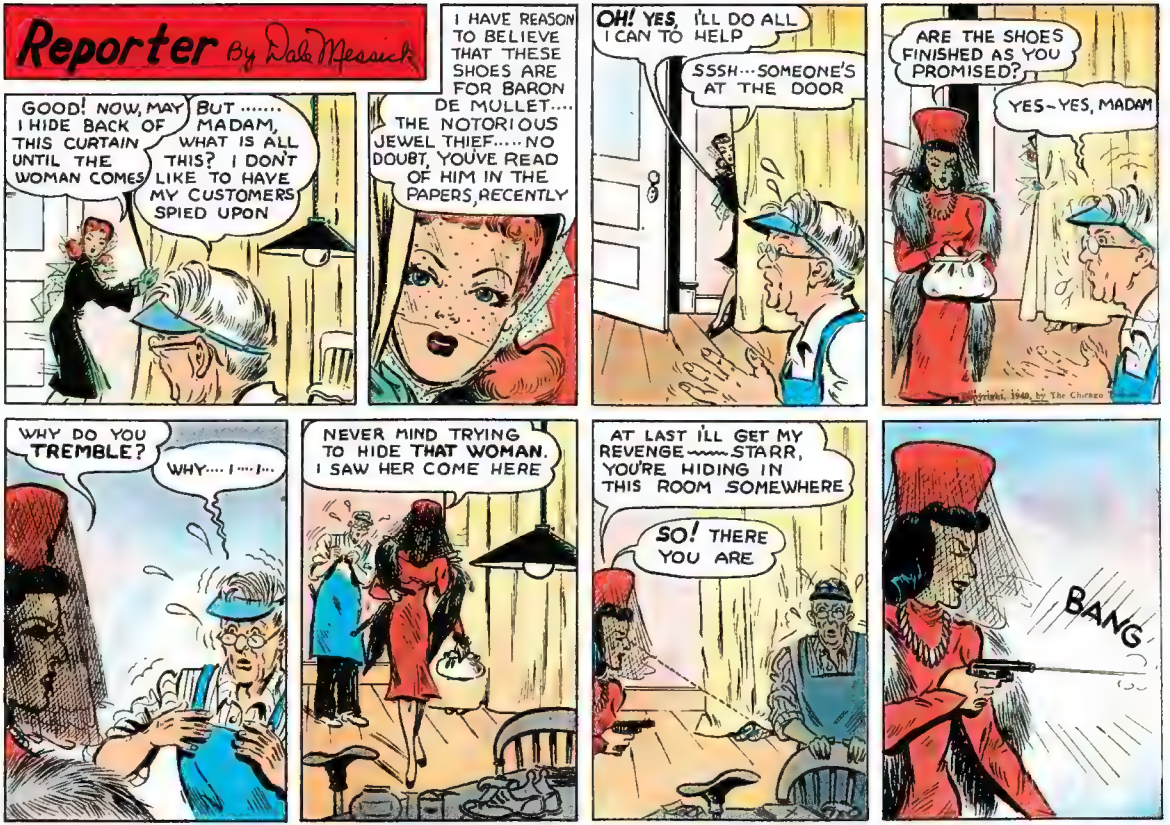
HOW'D YOU GET THE BARON'S SHOES?
I THREW MY OWN SHOES AWAY WHEN THE BARON WASN'T LOOKING, AND THEN EXPLAINED THAT THEY WERE SO LARGE I LOST THEM WHEN HE GRABBED ME AND STARTED FOR HIS OTHER HIDEOUT
OH, SO HE HAD TO GIVE YOU A PAIR OF HIS ..... AND HOW ARE THEY GOING TO BE A CLUE?
DOPEY, SEE HOW SMALL THEY ARE! SIZE 4
BRENDA STARR
MEN'S SHOES JUST DON'T COME THAT SMALL ..... SO THE BARON MUST HAVE HIS SHOES MADE TO ORDER..... NOW, I'M GOING TO ALL THE SHOE MAKERS IN TOWN, AND TRY TO GET A LINE ON HIM THAT WAY
GOSH!.... THEY ARE SMALL... SAY..... MAYBE HE'S A WOMAN
IDIOT, HE HAD A BEARD
I KNOW..... HE'S A BEARDED LADY
HA! HA!
HAVE YOU FIGURED OUT YET HOW HE SHAVED IT OFF IN THE ELEVATOR?
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
YES, BRENDA, SINCE YOU HAVE GONE IN FOR A LITTLE PLAIN AND FANCY SLEUTHING ..... HOW DID THE BARON GET RID OF HIS BEARD?


Reporter by Dale Messick
DETECTIVE STARR, THERE'S A MYSTERY TO SINK YOUR TEETH INTO
O.K., BIG BOY! I KNOW ALL THIS IS VERY AMUSING TO YOU
LATER, THE SAME DAY
GOSH! WHAT A PILE OF MAIL I HAVE
YOU'RE A CELEBRITY NOW
HERE'S A LETTER FROM ROBERT BLUE, WHO GOT MY S.O.S. MESSAGE THAT I TAPPED ON THE RADIATOR WHEN I WAS HELD CAPTIVE BY THE BARON..... HUMM.... HE'S MY HERO. GUESS I'LL DASH OUT AND GIVE HIM A WRITE UP..... WONDER WHAT HE'S LIKE?
NEVER MIND, BRENDA, ABOUT BOBBIE BLUE, I JUST GOT HIS STORY.... HERE'S HIS PICTURE
OH! HE'S JUST A KID ..... WELL, A HERO'S A HERO NO MATTER WHAT HIS AGE
HERE'S A PACKAGE FOR YOU, BEAUTIFUL
THANKS, PESKY, DARLING
WHY..... IT'S AN ELECTRIC RAZOR, AND WHAT'S THIS CONTRAPTION?
IT'S A BATTERY..... AN ELECTRIC RAZOR WITH A BATTERY ATTACHMENT, NOT BAD—
WHO'S IT FROM?
-AND HERE'S A LETTER— OH! OH!..... READ THIS
DEAR BRENDA STARR
YOU NEVER GUESSED THE CREED OR RACE
I CAME FROM WHEN I SHAVED MY FACE
I USED THIS GADGET AS MY REJUVENATOR
AND YOU PASSED ME BY IN THE ELEVATOR
THE BARON
TO BE CONTINUED

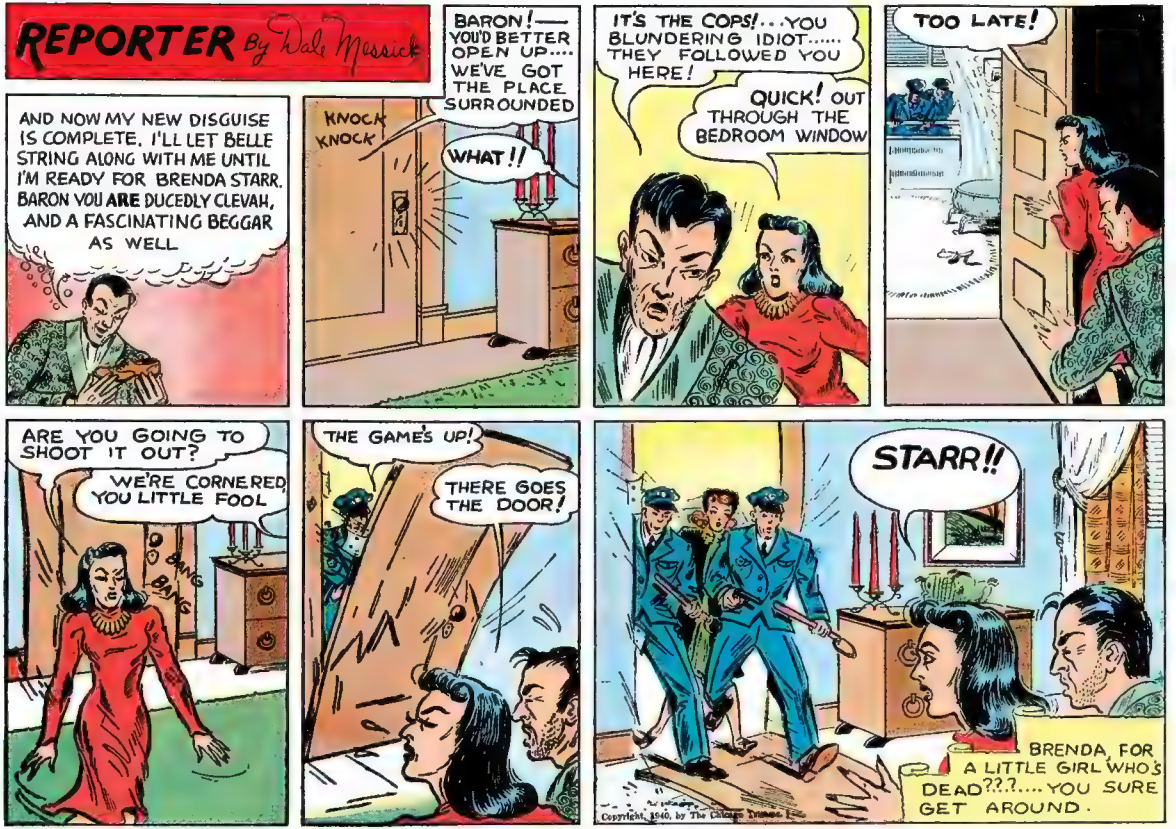

HELLO ···· MR. WALTERS, THIS IS BRENDA. WOULD IT BE O.K. IF I DIDNT SHOW UP AT THE OFFICE TODAY? BEEN SO MUCH EXCITEMENT I FEEL SORT OF FRAYED AT THE EDGES... WHATS THAT?
OH! SO YOURE STILL RAZZING ME BECAUSE I'M TRYING TO GET A LINE ON THE BARON? WELL, LAUGH ALL YOU LIKE. WHEN I GET A HUNCH, I'VE JUST GOT TO FOLLOW IT TO THE BITTER END. THANKS FOR THE DAY OFF..... THE REST WILL DO ME GOOD...
ONE HALF HOUR LATER
BRENDA STARR★
OF COURSE, IF I TOLD THE BOSS THAT THE WAY I REST IS TO GO SHOPPING, HE MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND... BUT, I SIMPLY MUST GET SOME CLOTHES..... FIRST, SHOES. THEN, ETC....
I'D LIKE THAT CUTE MODEL IN THE WINDOW, 58003, SIZE 4 .... ALTHOUGH THE WAY MY FEET FEEL TODAY, I SHOULD TAKE SIZE 8...
WELL! WHICH IS IT? SIZE 4, OR SIZE 8
HMM... SORRY IF I SEEM TO ANNOY YOU
OH! PARDON, MADAM, BUT, I JUST GOT THROUGH WITH AN EXASPERATING CUSTOMER WHO WANTED US TO MAKE SIZE 8 SHOES TO FIT SIZE 4 FEET..... THIS STORE JUST DOESN'T CATER TO THAT KIND OF BUSINESS
THAT IS ODD,...WHAT WOMAN WOULD WANT HER FEET TO LOOK LARGE?
YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND, THE SHOES ARE FOR A GENTLEMAN
Copyright 1940 by The Chicago Tribune


Reporter By Dale Messick
A MAN! IT'S THE BARON, OF COURSE..... THAT EXPLAINS EVERTHING..... HE KNEW I HAD HIS SHOES, SO HE'S DISGUISING HIS SMALL SIZE 4 FEET, TO LOOK LARGE.....
WHEN YOU REFUSED TO MAKE THESE SHOES, WHAT DID HE DO?
I RECOMMENDED A PLACE WHERE THEY'LL MAKE ANYTHING IF ONE'S GOT THE PRICE
WOULD YOU GIVE ME THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE MAN WHO IS GOING TO MAKE THESE SHOES?
HERE IT IS, MADAM, 13 WEST MAIN ST, ONE FLIGHT UP
THANKS,..... NEVER MIND MY SHOES, I'LL SEE YOU LATER
CRAZY PEOPLE
TAXI!
Copyright 1940, by The Chicago Tribune.
13 WEST MAIN ST..... AND MAKE IT SNAPPY
HEY! THE JOKE'S ON ME! I WAS GOING TO PLAY HOOKEY TODAY..... WELL, THERE GOES MY SHOPPING INTO A COCKED HAT.... OR MAYBE I SHOULD SAY INTO THE BARON'S SHOES
IS THIS GOING TO BE ANOTHER WILD GOOSE CHASE?

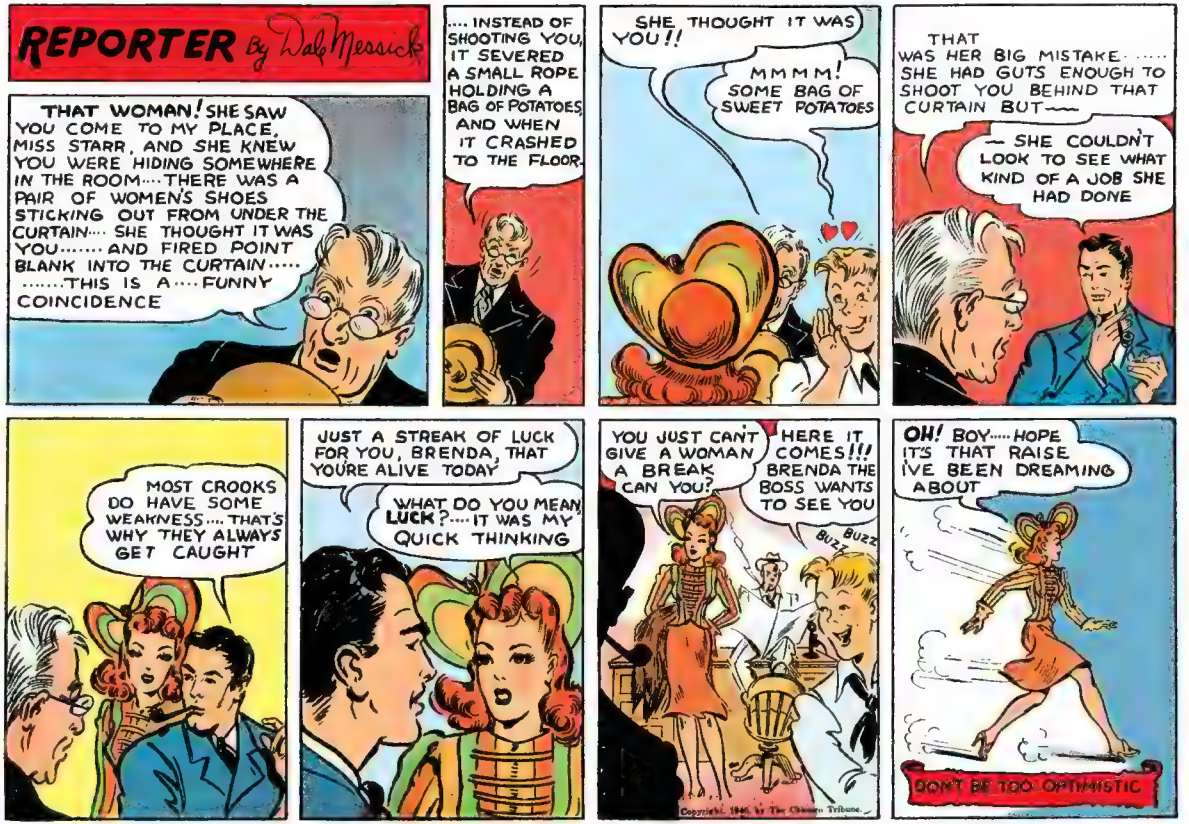

BRENDA STARR★
BRENDA, SUSPECTS THE BARON OF HAVING SOME SHOES MADE TO ORDER TO DISGUISE HIS SMALL FEET— AND SHE'S DOING SOME SLEUTHING ON HER OWN.....
THIS IS THE PLACE ..... GEE, IF I CAN JUST HELP IN THE CAPTURE OF THE BARON, WHAT A FEATHER IN MY CAP THAT WILL BE !!
13
YES, MADAM, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I'M A REPORTER ON THE FLASH— AND WANT YOU TO ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS
IS IT TRUE, YOU ARE MAKING A PAIR OF SHOES SIZE 8, TO FIT SIZE 4 FEET?
YES ??
TELL ME ALL YOU CAN ABOUT THIS MAN,
I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE MAN WHO IS TO WEAR THESE SHOES, A WOMAN GAVE THE ORDER
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
A WOMAN! WHAT DID SHE LOOK LIKE?
IT MUST BE BELLE, THE BARON'S ACCOMPLICE
SHE WAS HEAVILY VEILED ALL I CAN SAY IS SHE WAS ABOUT YOUR SIZE
WHEN WILL SHE BE HERE FOR THE SHOES?
THEY ARE READY I EXPECT THE WOMAN TO CALL ANY TIME


Reporter By Dale Messick
GOOD! NOW, MAY I HIDE BACK OF THIS CURTAIN UNTIL THE WOMAN COMES
BUT ..... MADAM, WHAT IS ALL THIS? I DON'T LIKE TO HAVE MY CUSTOMERS SPIED UPON
I HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THESE SHOES ARE FOR BARON DE MULLET.... THE NOTORIOUS JEWEL THIEF..... NO DOUBT, YOU'VE READ OF HIM IN THE PAPERS, RECENTLY
OH! YES, I'LL DO ALL I CAN TO HELP
SSSH··· SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR
ARE THE SHOES FINISHED AS YOU PROMISED?
YES~YES, MADAM
WHY DO YOU TREMBLE?
WHY.... I ···· I···
NEVER MIND TRYING TO HIDE THAT WOMAN. I SAW HER COME HERE
AT LAST I'LL GET MY REVENGE~~~~ STARR, YOU'RE HIDING IN THIS ROOM SOMEWHERE
SO! THERE YOU ARE
BANG

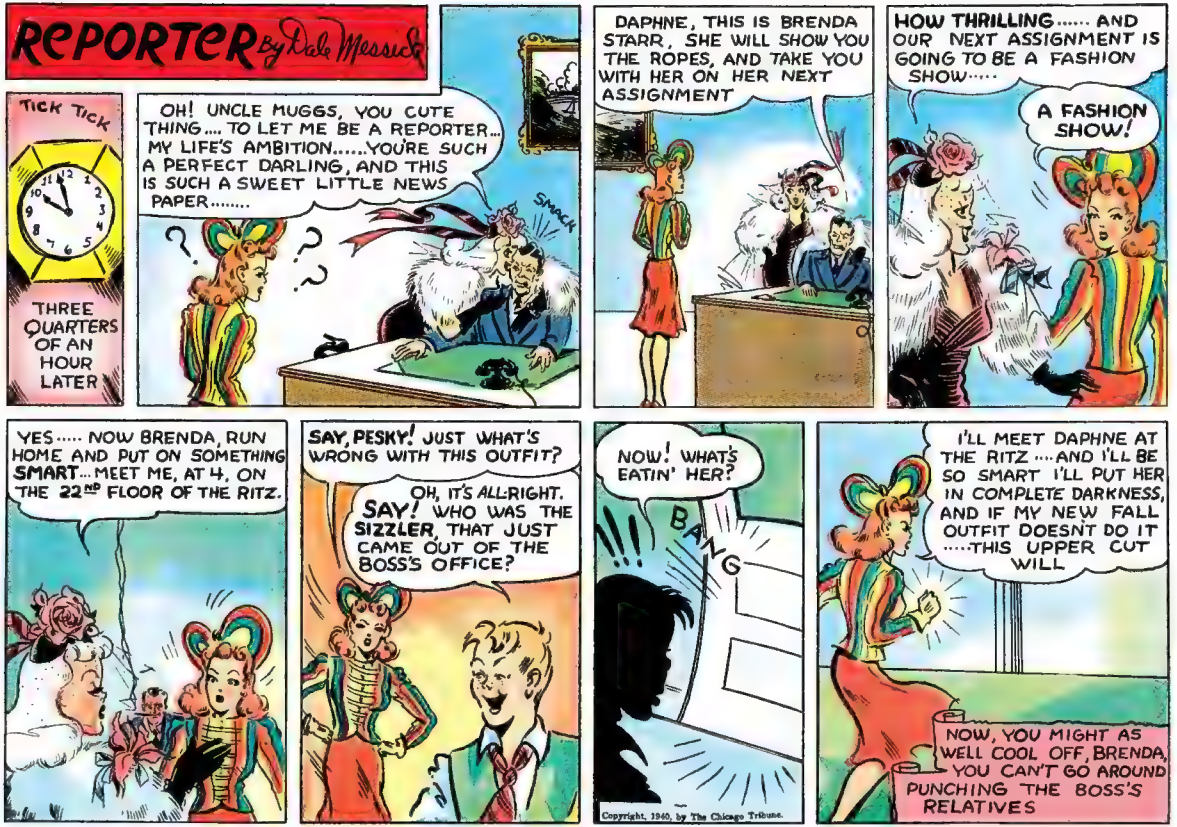
..BRENDA, HOT ON THE TRAIL OF THE "BARON" HAS BEEN FOLLOWED INTO THE SHOE SHOP BY BELLE, THE BARON'S ACCOMPLICE, BRENDA TRIES TO MAKE A GETAWAY BUT---
PLOP
THAT'S ONE LESS REPORTER PLAYING DETECTIVE
PLOP
AS FOR YOU, LITTLE MAN, GET INTO THAT CLOSET. I'LL LET YOU LIVE.....THE BARON MIGHT WANT ANOTHER PAIR OF SHOES
BRENDA STARR★
CLICK
CLICK
NO SOUND FROM STARR..... SHE'S FINISHED!!
AS BELLE DASHES OFF IN A CAB, A SECOND TAXICAB FOLLOWS..... LOOKS AS IF POOR BRENDA FAILED THIS TIME..... AND SOMEONE ELSE WILL CAPTURE THE BARON. ..... MAYBE A REAL DETECTIVE!!
DID YOU GET THE SHOES?
YES, BARON, BUT I HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE.. WE'D BETTER CLEAR OUT
WHAT A SOFTY I WAS..... I SHOULD HAVE KILLED THAT STUPID SHOEMAKER TOO, NOW HE'LL TALK AND I'LL BE WANTED FOR MURDER..... AND NO TELLING WHAT THE BARON WILL DO WHEN HE FINDS OUT I SHOT STARR


REPORTER By Dale Messick
AND NOW MY NEW DISGUISE IS COMPLETE. I'LL LET BELLE STRING ALONG WITH ME UNTIL I'M READY FOR BRENDA STARR. BARON YOU ARE DUCEDLY CLEVAH, AND A FASCINATING BEGGAR AS WELL
BARON!— YOU'D BETTER OPEN UP.... WE'VE GOT THE PLACE SURROUNDED
KNOCK KNOCK
WHAT!!
IT'S THE COPS!...YOU BLUNDERING IDIOT..... THEY FOLLOWED YOU HERE!
QUICK! OUT THROUGH THE BEDROOM WINDOW
TOO LATE!
ARE YOU GOING TO SHOOT IT OUT?
WE'RE CORNERED, YOU LITTLE FOOL
BANG BANG
THE GAME'S UP!
THERE GOES THE DOOR!
STARR!!
BRENDA, FOR A LITTLE GIRL WHO'S DEAD???....YOU SURE GET AROUND.
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune

AT LONG LAST, THE "BARON" AND BELLE ARE BEHIND BARS, THANKS TO BRENDA AND HER SLEUTHING
HELLO EVERYBODY
YOU'LL GET A SWELL BONUS
YOU'RE O.K., KID
BRENDA STARR
WE OF THE "FLASH" ARE SURE PROUD OF YOU, BRENDA
GOSH! GIVE US THE INSIDE STORY
THAT "MOLL" OF THE BARON'S HAS GONE OFF HER BEAN, THINKS YOU'RE A GHOST, CLAIMS TO HAVE SHOT YOU, AND THEN AN HOUR LATER YOU TURN UP WITH THE COPS--- WHAT HAPPENED?
WELL, PESKY, WHEN I SAW BELLE COMING, I PLANTED A DUMMY BEHIND THE CURTAIN TO FOOL HER----
THEN, TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE, I GOT INTO THE DUMB WAITER, LET MYSELF DOWN, HAILED A CAB AND WAITED FOR BELLE TO COME OUT SO I COULD TRAIL HER TO THE BARON'S HIDEOUT
THAT'S ALL I KNOW ABOUT THE SHOOTING..... AS SOON AS THE SHOEMAKER GETS HERE, HE'LL LIKELY BE ABLE TO PUT SOME LIGHT ON THE STORY
HERE HE COMES NOW
WE FOUND HIM LOCKED IN A CLOSET
MR. SMITH DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE SHOOTING?
YY-YES!
Copyright 1940, by The Chicago Tribune


REPORTER By Walt Messick
THAT WOMAN! SHE SAW YOU COME TO MY PLACE, MISS STARR, AND SHE KNEW YOU WERE HIDING SOMEWHERE IN THE ROOM.... THERE WAS A PAIR OF WOMEN'S SHOES STICKING OUT FROM UNDER THE CURTAIN.... SHE THOUGHT IT WAS YOU..... AND FIRED POINT BLANK INTO THE CURTAIN..... .....THIS IS A.... FUNNY COINCIDENCE
.... INSTEAD OF SHOOTING YOU, IT SEVERED A SMALL ROPE HOLDING A BAG OF POTATOES AND WHEN IT CRASHED TO THE FLOOR
SHE THOUGHT IT WAS YOU!!
MMMM! SOME BAG OF SWEET POTATOES
THAT WAS HER BIG MISTAKE..... SHE HAD GUTS ENOUGH TO SHOOT YOU BEHIND THAT CURTAIN BUT—
— SHE COULDN'T LOOK TO SEE WHAT KIND OF A JOB SHE HAD DONE
MOST CROOKS DO HAVE SOME WEAKNESS.... THAT'S WHY THEY ALWAYS GET CAUGHT
JUST A STREAK OF LUCK FOR YOU, BRENDA, THAT YOU'RE ALIVE TODAY
WHAT DO YOU MEAN LUCK?.... IT WAS MY QUICK THINKING
YOU JUST CAN'T GIVE A WOMAN A BREAK CAN YOU?
HERE IT COMES!!! BRENDA THE BOSS WANTS TO SEE YOU
BUZZ
BUZZ
Copyright, 1945, by The Chicago Tribune.
OH! BOY..... HOPE IT'S THAT RAISE I'VE BEEN DREAMING ABOUT
DON'T BE TOO OPTIMISTIC

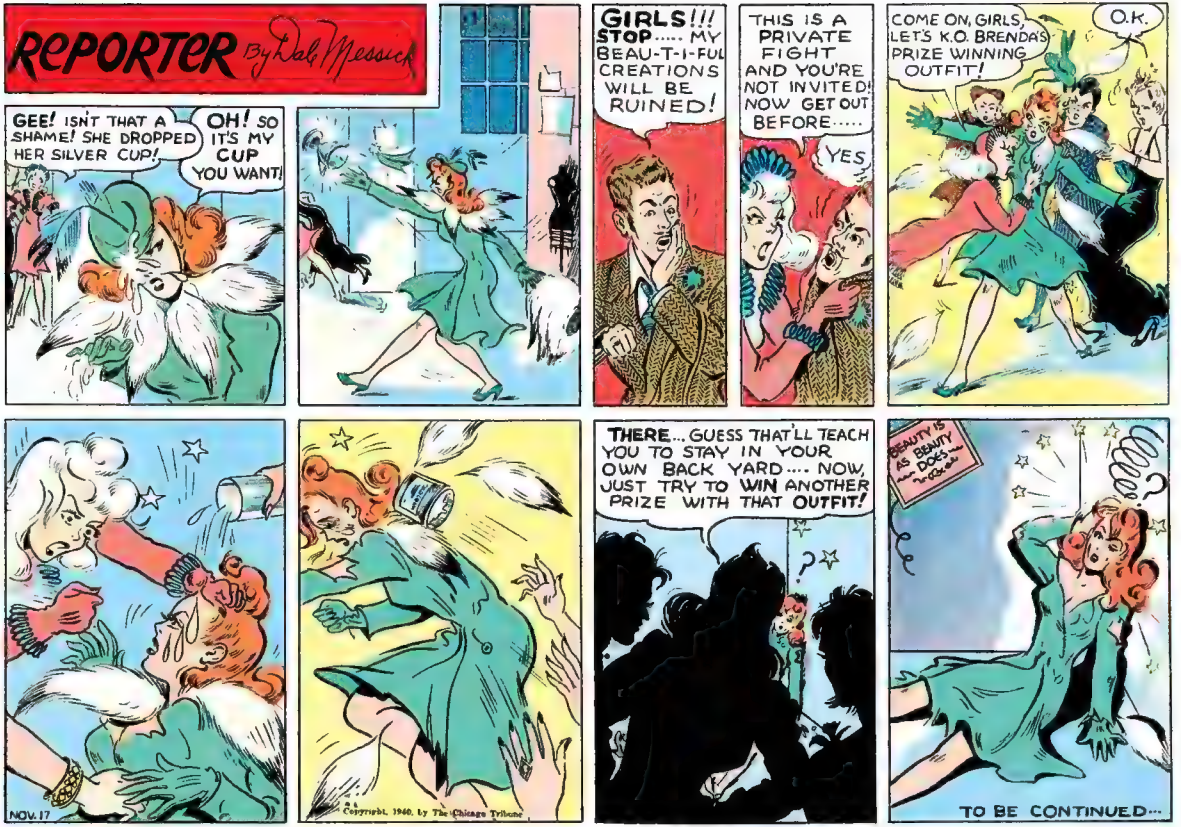
WE HAVE OUR FINGERS CROSSED FOR, YOU, BRENDA AND HOPE ITS THAT RAISE
YOU WANTED TO SEE ME MR. WALTERS?
STARR, YOU SURPRISED ME, I'LL HAVE TO ADMIT I DIDN'T THINK A WOMAN COULD DO IT, (ESPECIALLY A PRETTY ONE) ..... AND BRENDA, YOU'VE CHANGED MY OPINION ABOUT WOMEN AS REPORTERS SO I HAVE DECIDED TO GIVE .....
YES!
BRENDA STARR
..... MY NIECE, DAPHNE DIMPLES, A CRACK AT BEING A REPORTER TOO!
OH!
I WANT YOU TO HELP HER GET STARTED. SHE'S A WONDERFUL GIRL AND VERY SMART
YES (I'LL BET)
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
WHY-ER-ER-ER... I'LL BET SHE'S SMART, MR WALTERS, IF SHE'S A NIECE OF YOURS
YOU GIRLS SHOULD BE GREAT FRIENDS. I EXPECT HER HERE ANY MINUTE HUM..... SHE PROMISED NOT TO KEEP ME WAITING.....
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune.


REPORTER By Dale Messick
TICK TICK
THREE QUARTERS OF AN HOUR LATER
OH! UNCLE MUGGS, YOU CUTE THING.... TO LET ME BE A REPORTER... MY LIFE'S AMBITION.....YOU'RE SUCH A PERFECT DARLING, AND THIS IS SUCH A SWEET LITTLE NEWS PAPER.....
SMACK
DAPHNE, THIS IS BRENDA STARR, SHE WILL SHOW YOU THE ROPES, AND TAKE YOU WITH HER ON HER NEXT ASSIGNMENT
HOW THRILLING..... AND OUR NEXT ASSIGNMENT IS GOING TO BE A FASHION SHOW.....
A FASHION SHOW!
YES..... NOW BRENDA, RUN HOME AND PUT ON SOMETHING SMART... MEET ME, AT 4, ON THE 22ND FLOOR OF THE RITZ.
SAY, PESKY! JUST WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS OUTFIT?
OH, IT'S ALL RIGHT. SAY! WHO WAS THE SIZZLER, THAT JUST CAME OUT OF THE BOSS'S OFFICE?
NOW! WHAT'S EATIN' HER?
BANG
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune.
I'LL MEET DAPHNE AT THE RITZ ....AND I'LL BE SO SMART I'LL PUT HER IN COMPLETE DARKNESS, AND IF MY NEW FALL OUTFIT DOESNT DO IT .....THIS UPPER CUT WILL
NOW, YOU MIGHT AS WELL COOL OFF, BRENDA, YOU CAN'T GO AROUND PUNCHING THE BOSS'S RELATIVES

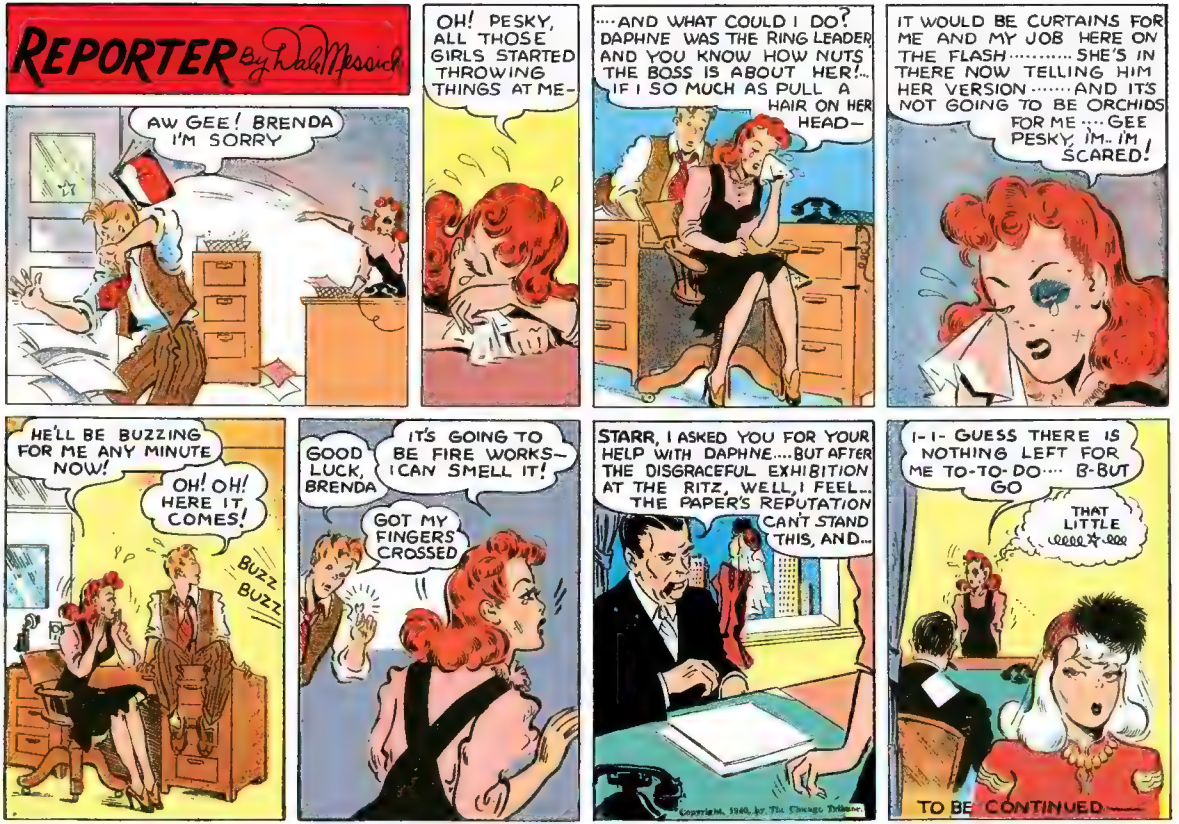
SAY!!! WHAT'S THE BOSS TRYING TO DO WITH OUR STARR REPORTER.... SENDING HER ON A SISSY'S JOB.... LIKE A FASHION SHOW!
A FASHION SHOW AND THE BOSS'S NIECE, DAPHNE DIMPLES, IS MY NEXT JOB.....
.... AND I'VE GOT TO SHOW HER THE ROPES
OH YES! I DID READ ABOUT THIS SHOW... NOW THAT PARIS IS NO LONGER
BRENDA STARR
THE STYLE DICTATOR THE AMERICAN DESIGNERS ARE HOLDING THIS BIG CONVENTION....
.... AND THE SOCIETY GLAMOR GIRLS ARE MODELING THE CLOTHES..... IT'S A CONTEST..... A SILVER CUP TO THE WINNER
SAY!..... I'LL BET DAPHNE'S ONE OF THE MODELS, AND JUST WANTS ME THERE TO GIVE HER A BIG WRITE UP..... THE LITTLE....
I'LL MEET HER AT THE RITZ..... AND GIVE HER AN INTERVIEW THAT WILL CURL HER HAIR
TAXI!
SOCIETY'S HERE ALL RIGHT

REPORTER By Dale Messick
HERE GORGEOUS! JUST FOLLOW THIS LINE
BUT I'M NOT ONE OF THE MODELS
HA! HA! WITH THAT OUTFIT AND THAT FIGURE
WELL O.K.... IF HE THINKS I'M A MODEL, THIS SUIT MUST LOOK PRETTY GOOD
YOU'RE NEXT.....DON'T BLINK AT THE LIGHTS
I'LL JUST STRUT MY STUFF AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS.....
LOVELY!
THE WINNER
WHO IS SHE?
BEAUTIFUL
WHY!—— THAT'S BRENDA STARR,—FROM UNCLE MUGG'S PAPER
SHE'S JUST A COMMON REPORTER. ARE YOU GIRLS GOING TO LET HER WALK OFF WITH THE FIRST PRIZE?
LET HER HAVE IT!
DUCK BRENDA!

BRENDA STARR
BOY! BRENDA WAS SURE BOILING WHEN SHE TORE OUT OF HERE THIS MORNING!
WHY?.... DIDN'T SHE GET THE BONUS SHE WAS EXPECTING?
NO..... AND TO ADD INSULT TO INJURY, THE BOSS BRINGS HIS DOPEY NIECE, DAPHNE DIMPLES, INTO OUR HAPPY LITTLE FOLD, AND WANTS BRENDA TO TEACH HER HOW TO BE A REPORTER
AND THE FIRST CRACK OUT OF THE POT, DAPHNE DRAGS BRENDA OFF TO A FASHION SHOW AT THE RITZ
PERSONALLY, I'M GLAD. I DON'T THINK SHE SHOULD MONKEY AROUND WITH CRIME.....
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
HUM ..... AT LEAST SHE'LL BE SAFE AT A FASHION SHOW
THE FLASH
GREAT CRIME WAVE
AND IN THE MEANTIME..... BRENDA, MISTAKEN FOR ONE OF THE MODELS, WALKS OFF WITH THE FIRST PRIZE... HOWEVER, DAPHNE AND HER FRIENDS ARE NOT QUITE SATISFIED WITH THE JUDGES' DECISION
LET HER HAVE IT!
WHAM
Copyright. 1940, by The Chicago Tribune.

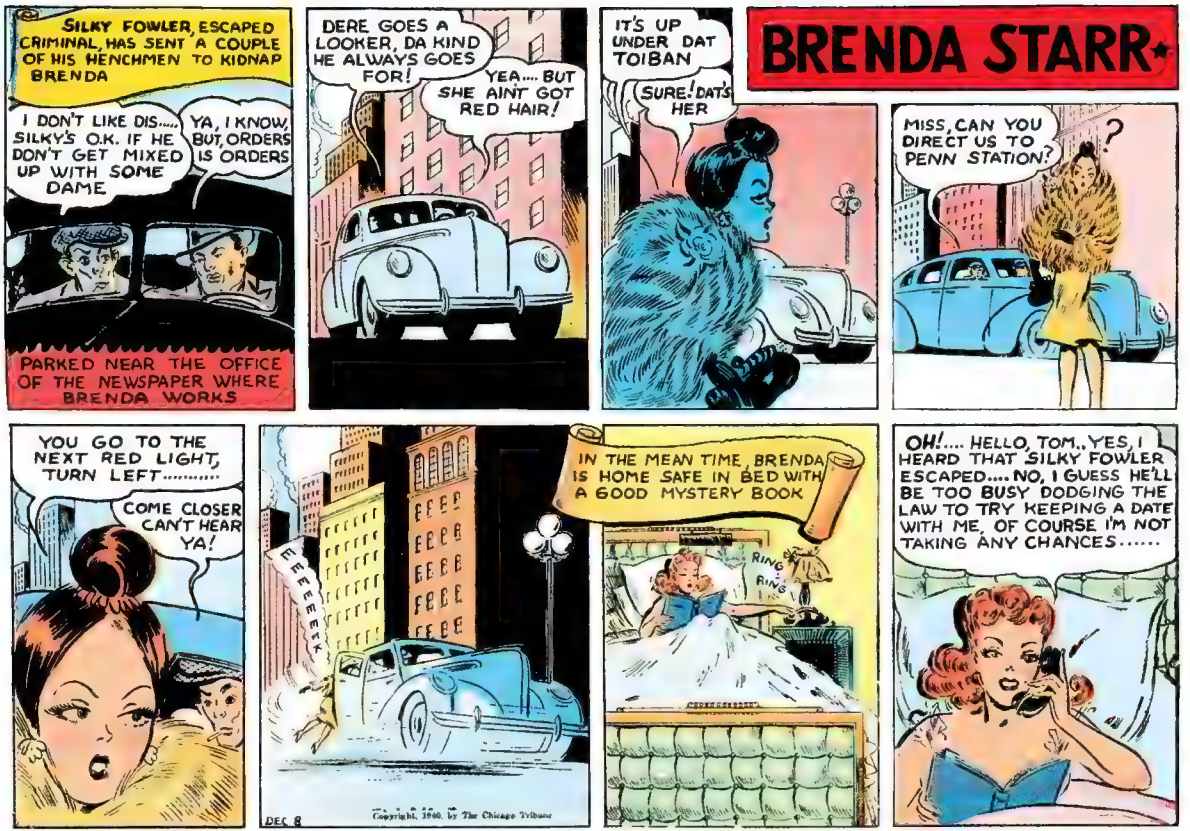

REPORTER By Dale Messick
GEE! ISN'T THAT A SHAME! SHE DROPPED HER SILVER CUP!
OH! SO IT'S MY CUP YOU WANT!
GIRLS!!! STOP..... MY BEAU-T-I-FUL CREATIONS WILL BE RUINED!
THIS IS A PRIVATE FIGHT AND YOU'RE NOT INVITED! NOW GET OUT BEFORE.....
YES
COME ON, GIRLS, LET'S K.O. BRENDA'S PRIZE WINNING OUTFIT!
O.K.
NOV. 17
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
THERE... GUESS THAT'LL TEACH YOU TO STAY IN YOUR OWN BACK YARD.... NOW, JUST TRY TO WIN ANOTHER PRIZE WITH THAT OUTFIT!
?
BEAUTY IS AS BEAUTY DOES
TO BE CONTINUED...

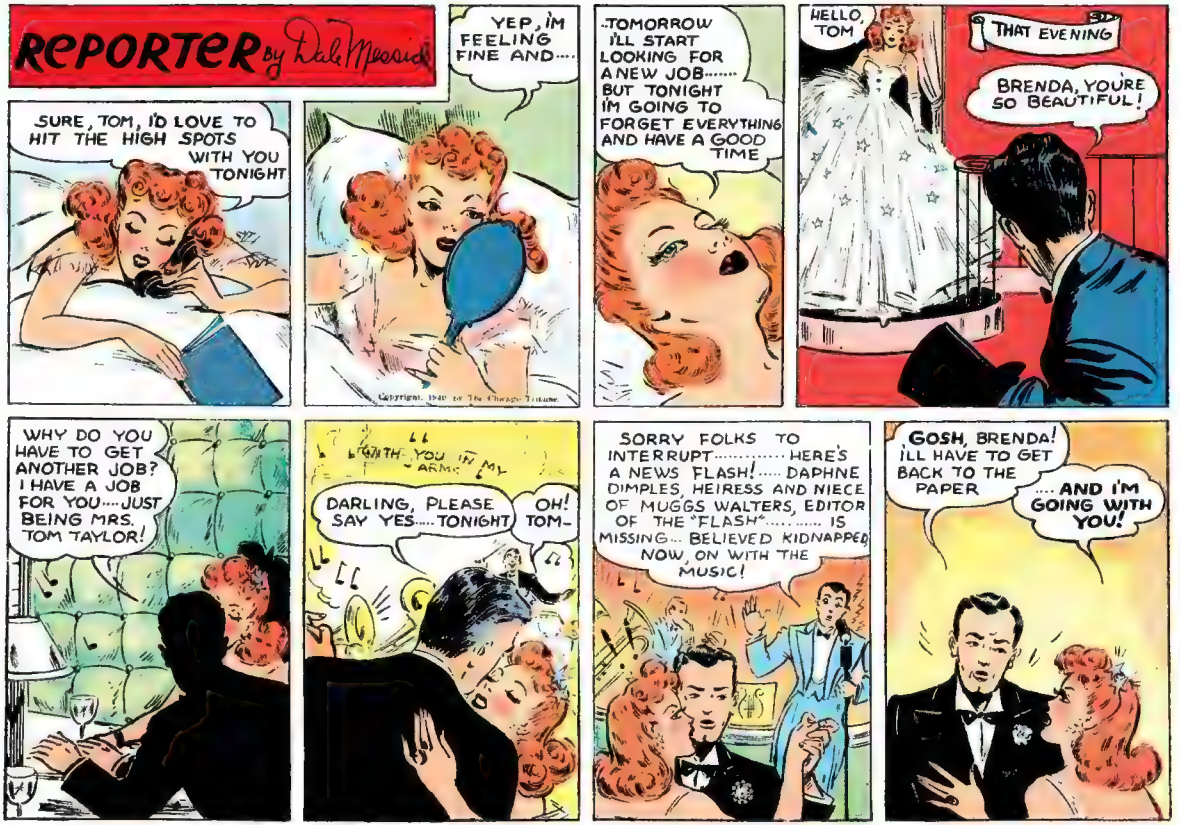
STARR GIVES DIMPLES A ONE-TWO TO THE CHIN!... DIMPLES COUNTERS WITH A LEFT HOOK TO THE JAW, AND A RIGHT TO THE BREADBASKET!..... STARR STAGGERED!..... STARR'S RIGHT GLEAMER IS CLOSING. BOY! WHAT A HAIR PULLING!.....
WHO IS STARR, AND WHO IS DIMPLES? NEVER HEARD OF 'EM. WHAT FIGHT WAS THAT? GIVE ME THE SPORT PAGE WHEN YOU'RE THROUGH
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SPORT PAGE! THIS IS SOCIETY NEWS!!
SOCIETY NEWS? WHAT THE !!!
BRENDA STARR
YEA .... THAT FASHION SHOW AT THE RITZ ENDED UP IN A RIOT!
SAY! YOU DON'T MEAN THAT WAS BRENDA STARR AND DAPHNE DIMPLES YOU WERE READIN' ABOUT?
YEA.... GET A LOAD OF THIS!!
HA! HA! LEAVE IT TO STARR TO MIX IT UP!
BET SHE WAS OUT-NUMBERED
SHE GOT THE WORST OF IT!
SSSH..... HERE SHE COMES NOW.
SOCIETY BRAWLS AT RITZ FASHION SHOW
NOV 24
GOOD MORNING STARR!
HI!
GOOD MORNING
HI YA, BRIGHT EYES!


REPORTER By Hal Mesick
AW GEE! BRENDA I'M SORRY
OH! PESKY, ALL THOSE GIRLS STARTED THROWING THINGS AT ME-
....AND WHAT COULD I DO? DAPHNE WAS THE RING LEADER AND YOU KNOW HOW NUTS THE BOSS IS ABOUT HER!... IF I SO MUCH AS PULL A HAIR ON HER HEAD—
IT WOULD BE CURTAINS FOR ME AND MY JOB HERE ON THE FLASH..... SHE'S IN THERE NOW TELLING HIM HER VERSION..... AND IT'S NOT GOING TO BE ORCHIDS FOR ME.... GEE PESKY, IM.. I'M SCARED!
HE'LL BE BUZZING FOR ME ANY MINUTE NOW!
OH! OH! HERE IT COMES!
BUZZ BUZZ
GOOD LUCK, BRENDA
IT'S GOING TO BE FIRE WORKS— I CAN SMELL IT!
GOT MY FINGERS CROSSED
STARR, I ASKED YOU FOR YOUR HELP WITH DAPHNE....BUT AFTER THE DISGRACEFUL EXHIBITION AT THE RITZ, WELL, I FEEL... THE PAPER'S REPUTATION CAN'T STAND THIS, AND...
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
I-I- GUESS THERE IS NOTHING LEFT FOR ME TO-TO-DO.... B-BUT GO
THAT LITTLE
TO BE CONTINUED

WITHOUT A CHANCE TO TELL HER SIDE OF THE BRAWL AT THE FASHION SHOW..... THE BOSS, INFLUENCED BY HIS NIECE, DAPHNE, FIRES BRENDA-
JUST WHEN I WAS GETTING STARTED, TOO .....THAT LITTLE WILD CAT HAD TO SPOIL EVERYTHING!
HE CAN'T DO THIS TO YOU!
BRENDA STARR
I HATE TO SEE BRENDA GET FIRED.... BUT..... MAYBE IT'LL BE THE ONLY WAY I'LL EVER GET HER TO MARRY ME
TAYLOR, WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK LIKE THE CAT THAT'S JUST SWALLOWED THE CANARY! I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, AND I'M NOT TAKING THE EASY WAY OUT!.....SO SAVE YOUR BREATH..... I WON'T MARRY YOU!!
THERE ARE OTHER NEWSPAPERS!
PLOP
GOSH!! BRENDA, YOU KNOW THE RULE HERE....ONCE YOU WORK ON ANOTHER PAPER, YOU CAN NEVER COME BACK!
SO, WHAT?
ATTA GIRL, BRENDA. A NEW HAT IS JUST THE TICKET
I WANT A HAT.... TO END ALL HATS!
BUT, MADAM!...

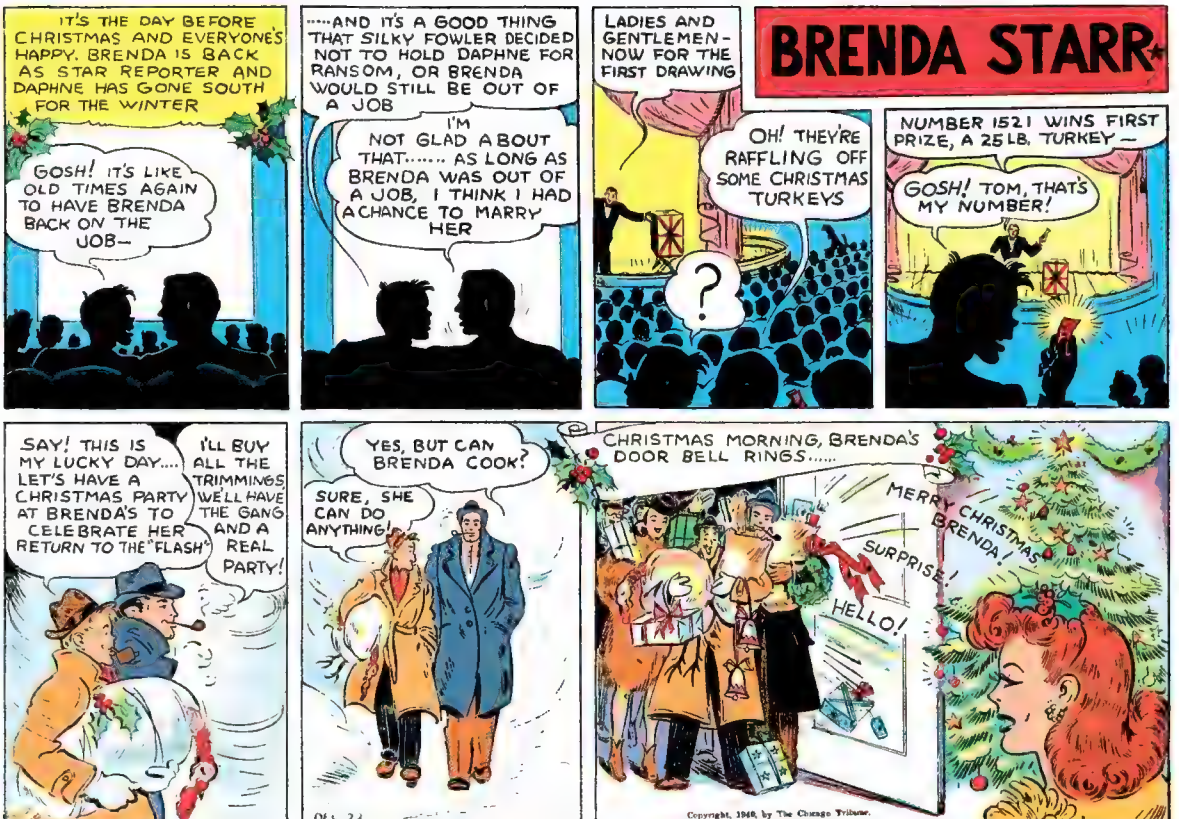
REPORTER by Walt Messick
MAYBE MADAM WILL BE MORE PLEASED WITH MY HATS WHEN ..ER... MADAM ..ER.. DOESN'T HAVE ZE BLACK EYE!
I ALWAYS BUY HATS WHEN I HAVE A BLACK EYE.....BECAUSE-
—IF THEY LOOK GOOD THEN, THEY'LL LOOK EVEN BETTER WHEN MY EYE'S O.K.
NOT BAD! THINK I'LL TAKE THIS ONE!
PAPER, PLEASE!
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune.
OH!
THE FLASH
SILKY FOWLER
NOTORIOUS CROOK DARING ESCAPE
SUDDENLY BRENDA REMEMBERS A SCENE IN THE JAIL, WHEN SHE GOT SILKY FOWLER TO TALK
DON'T FORGET, BABE, YOU AND ME'S GOT A DATE..... SOON AS I MAKE A BREAK!

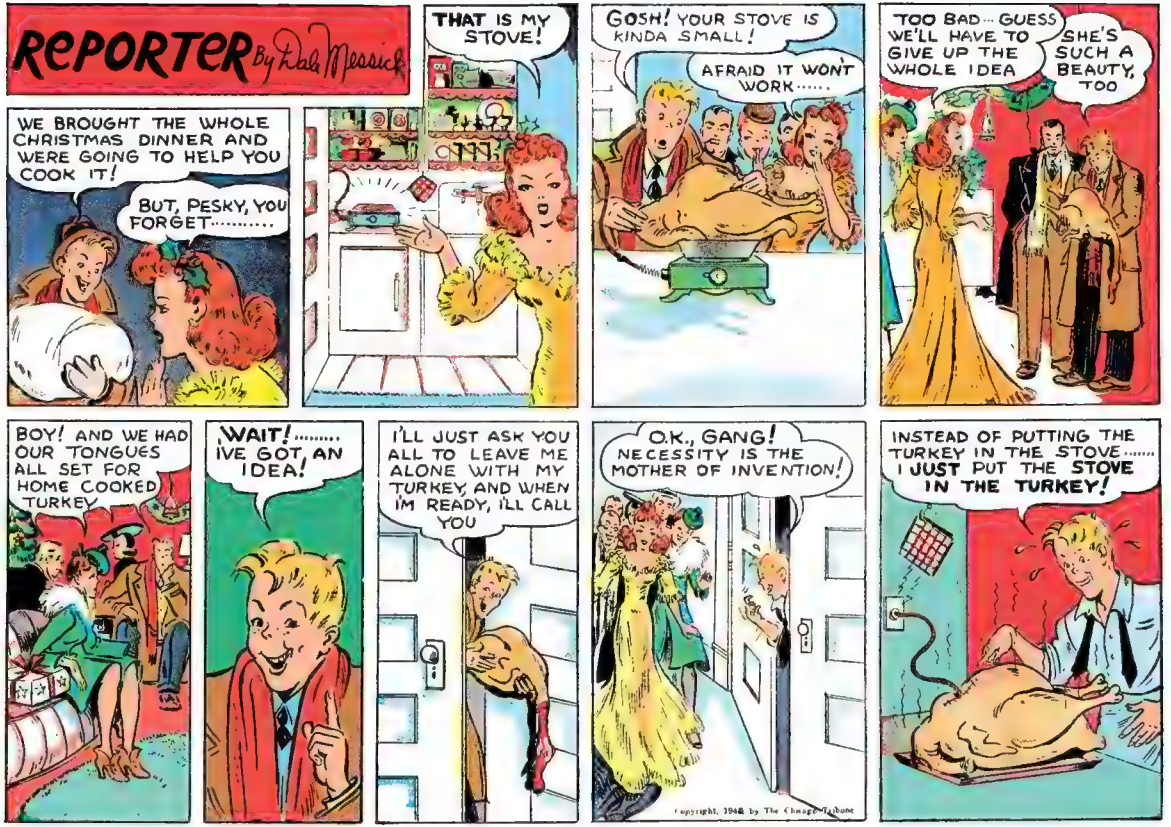

SILKY FOWLER, ESCAPED CRIMINAL, HAS SENT A COUPLE OF HIS HENCHMEN TO KIDNAP BRENDA
I DON'T LIKE DIS..... SILKY'S O.K. IF HE DON'T GET MIXED UP WITH SOME DAME
YA, I KNOW, BUT, ORDERS IS ORDERS
PARKED NEAR THE OFFICE OF THE NEWSPAPER WHERE BRENDA WORKS
DERE GOES A LOOKER, DA KIND HE ALWAYS GOES FOR!
YEA.... BUT SHE AINT GOT RED HAIR!
IT'S UP UNDER DAT TOIBAN
SURE! DAT'S HER
BRENDA STARR
MISS, CAN YOU DIRECT US TO PENN STATION?
YOU GO TO THE NEXT RED LIGHT, TURN LEFT.....
COME CLOSER CAN'T HEAR YA!
EEEEEEEK
DEC 8
Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
IN THE MEAN TIME, BRENDA IS HOME SAFE IN BED WITH A GOOD MYSTERY BOOK
RING RING
OH!.... HELLO, TOM.. YES, I HEARD THAT SILKY FOWLER ESCAPED.... NO, I GUESS HE'LL BE TOO BUSY DODGING THE LAW TO TRY KEEPING A DATE WITH ME, OF COURSE I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES.....


REPORTER by Dale Messick
SURE, TOM, I'D LOVE TO HIT THE HIGH SPOTS WITH YOU TONIGHT
YEP, I'M FEELING FINE AND....
..TOMORROW I'LL START LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB..... BUT TONIGHT I'M GOING TO FORGET EVERYTHING AND HAVE A GOOD TIME
HELLO, TOM
THAT EVENING
BRENDA, YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL!
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO GET ANOTHER JOB? I HAVE A JOB FOR YOU....JUST BEING MRS. TOM TAYLOR!
DARLING, PLEASE SAY YES....TONIGHT
OH! TOM-
SORRY FOLKS TO INTERRUPT..... HERE'S A NEWS FLASH!..... DAPHNE DIMPLES, HEIRESS AND NIECE OF MUGGS WALTERS, EDITOR OF THE "FLASH"..... IS MISSING... BELIEVED KIDNAPPED NOW, ON WITH THE MUSIC!
GOSH, BRENDA! I'LL HAVE TO GET BACK TO THE PAPER
....AND I'M GOING WITH YOU!

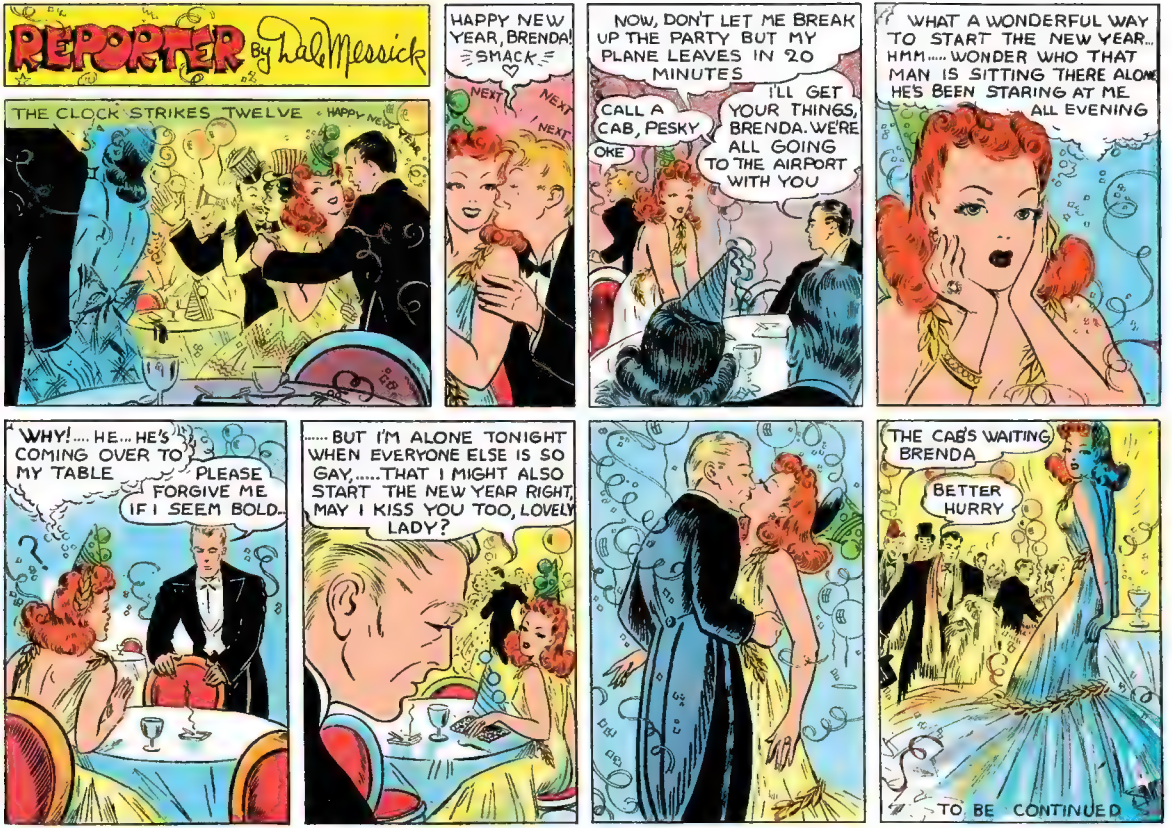
WHILE TOM AND BRENDA ARE DANCING AT A SUPPER CLUB, THE MUSIC IS STOPPED FOR A NEWS FLASH — DAPHNE DIMPLES, WEALTHY NIECE OF MUGGS WALTERS, EDITOR OF THE "FLASH",..... IS MISSING..... BELIEVED KIDNAPED.....
I MUST GET BACK TO THE PAPER!
WAIT, TOM— I'M GOING WITH YOU!
MR WALTERS, EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE DISCHARGED ME FROM THE "FLASH," I'M HERE NOW TO DO ALL I CAN TO HELP
THANKS, STARR, I MAY BE ABLE TO USE YOU
OF COURSE SHE WAS KIDNAPED FOR RANSOM, AND WE CAN'T DO MUCH UNTIL WE GET SOME WORD FROM THE KIDNAPERS
BRENDA STARR
FUNNY THIS HAPPENED THE SAME DAY SILKY FOWLER ESCAPED
YES, I WAS AFRAID HE MIGHT GO AFTER BRENDA
REMEMBER, HE TOOK SUCH A LIKING TO HER..... SHE WAS THE ONLY REPORTER HE WOULD GIVE AN INTERVIEW TO..... AND HE PLANNED A DATE WITH HER SHOULD HE EVER MAKE A JAIL BREAK
SAY! YOU DON'T SUPPOSE THAT HE WAS REALLY OUT GUNNING FOR BRENDA AND PICKED UP DAPHNE BY MISTAKE!
HOW COULD ANYONE MAKE SUCH A MISTAKE!....SHE'S A BLONDE ....AND BRENDA'S A REDHEAD
WELL, IT'S POSSIBLE.....WHAT WAS SHE WEARING?
A TURBAN,— SAY, YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THERE! NONE OF HER BLOND HAIR WAS SHOWING
WELL, THIS THEORIZING ISN'T GETTING US ANY WHERE.... WE NEED ACTION.....

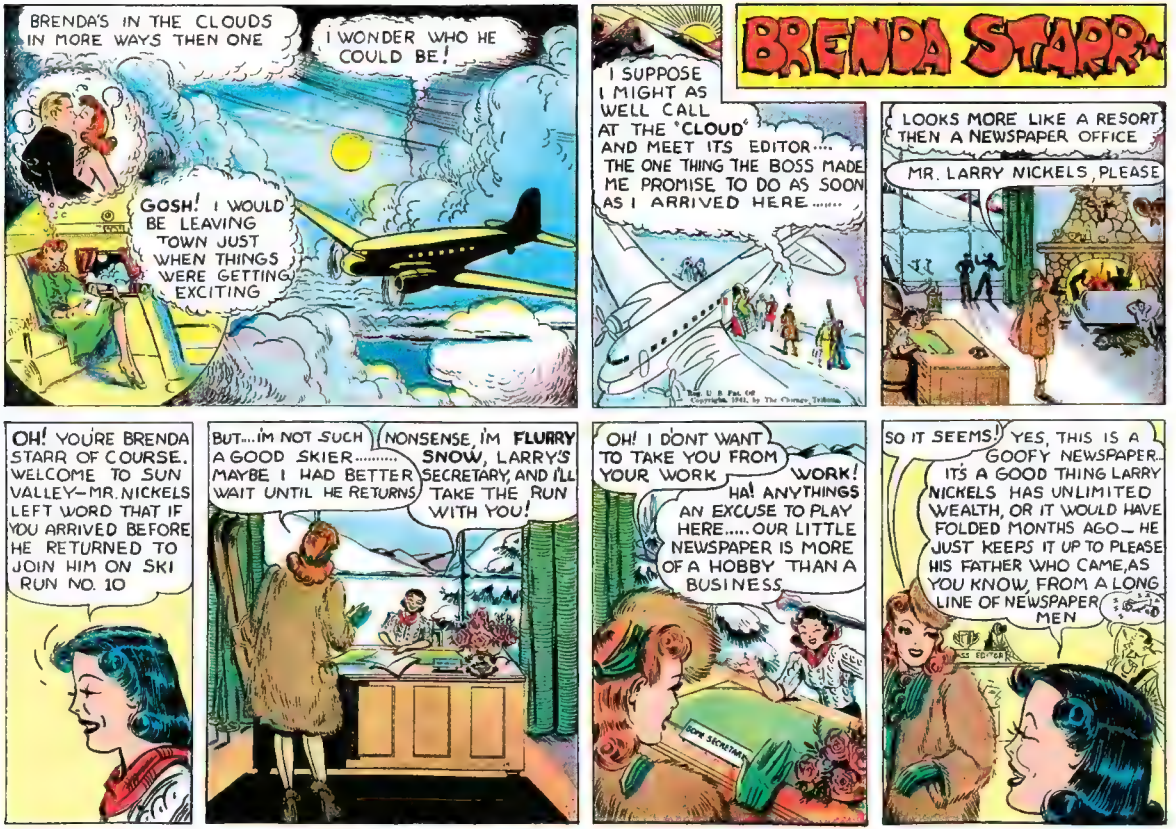
REPORTER By Dale Messick
SUDDENLY THE DOOR FLIES OPEN AND
DAPHNE!
OH! UNCLE MUGGS!
DAPHNE!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
THANK GOD SHE'S ALIVE!
WHAT HAPPENED?
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
THE... THE... MOST TERRIBLE THING HAS HAPPENED TO ME..... I-I-I'VE BEEN..... JILTED!
JILTED!
Y-Y-YES..... SILKY FOWLER THREW ME OUT HE-HE-DIDN'T WANT ME.....
HE WANTED TO KIDNAP BRENDA, AND NOT ME
DAPHNE! I'M DISGUSTED WITH YOU..... SILKY FOWLER'S A DESPERATE CRIMINAL, YOU SHOULD BE THANKFUL YOU'RE HOME SAFE
WELL! I DON'T CARE WHAT HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE..... HE WAS THE MOST THRILLING THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ME....
.... I.... LIKED SILKY FOWLER.... HE WAS SO ROMANTIC
DAPHNE, HAVENT YOU ANY SENSE?
COME ON, TOM, THIS IS WHERE WE CAME IN—
H'M.... GUESS DAPHNE WASN'T CUT OUT TO BE A NEWSPAPER WOMAN..... I'LL SEND HER SOUTH FOR THE WINTER..... AND TRY TO GET STARR BACK
BOO, HOO!
—TO BE CONTINUED


IT'S THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS AND EVERYONE'S HAPPY. BRENDA IS BACK AS STAR REPORTER AND DAPHNE HAS GONE SOUTH FOR THE WINTER
GOSH! IT'S LIKE OLD TIMES AGAIN TO HAVE BRENDA BACK ON THE JOB—
.....AND IT'S A GOOD THING THAT SILKY FOWLER DECIDED NOT TO HOLD DAPHNE FOR RANSOM, OR BRENDA WOULD STILL BE OUT OF A JOB
I'M NOT GLAD ABOUT THAT..... AS LONG AS BRENDA WAS OUT OF A JOB, I THINK I HAD A CHANCE TO MARRY HER
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN— NOW FOR THE FIRST DRAWING
BRENDA STARR
OH! THEY'RE RAFFLING OFF SOME CHRISTMAS TURKEYS
?
NUMBER 1521 WINS FIRST PRIZE, A 25 LB. TURKEY—
GOSH! TOM, THAT'S MY NUMBER!
SAY! THIS IS MY LUCKY DAY.... LET'S HAVE A CHRISTMAS PARTY AT BRENDA'S TO CELEBRATE HER RETURN TO THE "FLASH"
I'LL BUY ALL THE TRIMMINGS WE'LL HAVE THE GANG AND A REAL PARTY!
YES, BUT CAN BRENDA COOK?
SURE, SHE CAN DO ANYTHING!
Dec 22
CHRISTMAS MORNING, BRENDA'S DOOR BELL RINGS.....
MERRY CHRISTMAS BRENDA!
SURPRISE!
HELLO!
Copyright, 1948, by The Chicago Tribune.

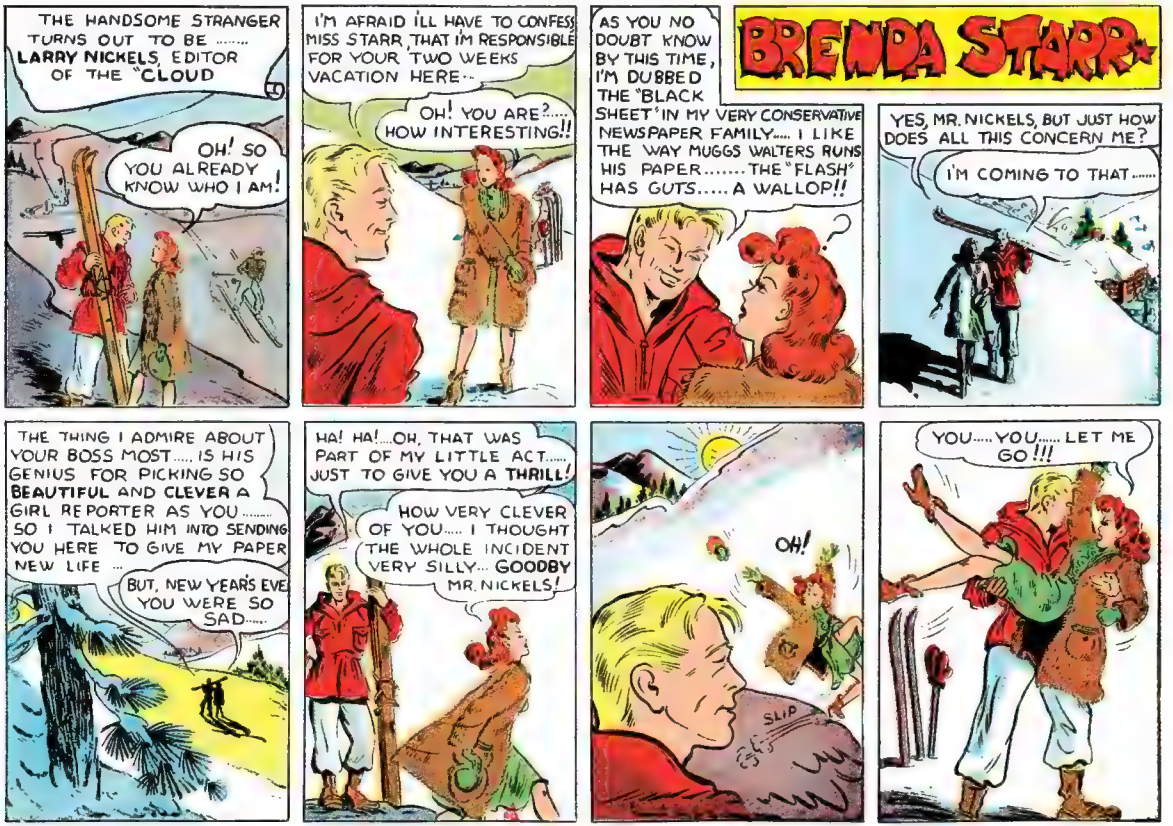

REPORTER By Bob Messick
WE BROUGHT THE WHOLE CHRISTMAS DINNER AND WERE GOING TO HELP YOU COOK IT!
BUT, PESKY, YOU FORGET.....
THAT IS MY STOVE!
GOSH! YOUR STOVE IS KINDA SMALL!
AFRAID IT WON'T WORK.....
TOO BAD... GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO GIVE UP THE WHOLE IDEA
SHE'S SUCH A BEAUTY, TOO
BOY! AND WE HAD OUR TONGUES ALL SET FOR HOME COOKED TURKEY
WAIT!..... I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
I'LL JUST ASK YOU ALL TO LEAVE ME ALONE WITH MY TURKEY, AND WHEN I'M READY, I'LL CALL YOU
O.K., GANG! NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION!
INSTEAD OF PUTTING THE TURKEY IN THE STOVE..... I JUST PUT THE STOVE IN THE TURKEY!
Copyright, 1948 by The Chicago Tribune

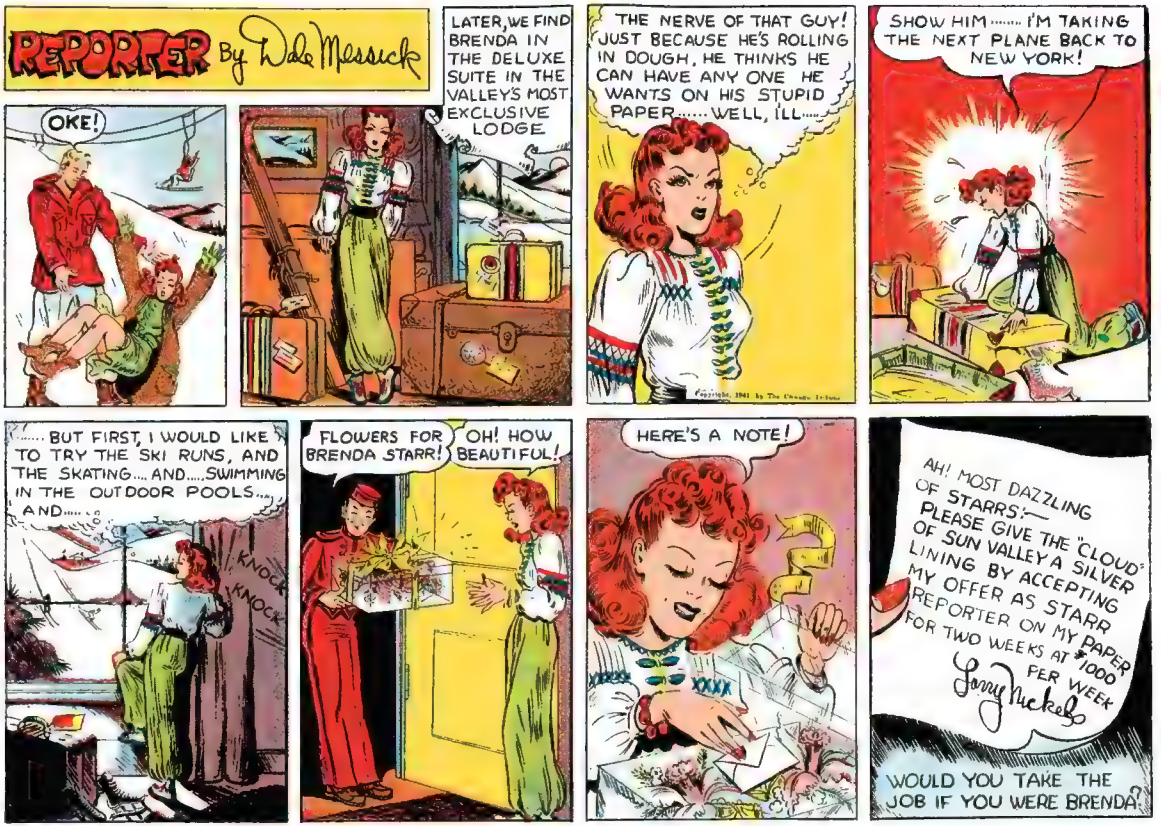
WHAT YOU DOING, PESKY?
SOME NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS
TICK TICK
HERE'S ONE FOR YOU..... NEVER EXPERIMENT WITH A TURKEY AGAIN
YOU SAID IT, THAT TURKEY I FIXED CHRISTMAS WASN'T ROASTED... IT WAS ELECTROCUTED
Resolutions
WHEE!..... LISTEN TO THIS.....AS A NEW YEAR'S PRESENT, THE BOSS IS GIVING ME A TWO WEEKS VACATION..... ALL EXPENSES PAID..... AND I'M OFF TO SUN VALLEY!
BRENDA STARR
MY PLANE LEAVES AT ONE O'CLOCK TONIGHT
THAT'S GREAT, BRENDA! BUT WHAT ABOUT OUR NEW YEAR'S PARTY, TONIGHT?
OH! DON'T WORRY, TOM, I'LL BE AT THE PARTY.....AND YOU CAN ALL COME TO THE AIRPORT TO SEE ME OFF
BRENDA, I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD GO TO A PLACE LIKE THAT ALONE. ANYTHING MIGHT HAPPEN
THAT'S RIGHT, TOM
...ROMANCE, ADVENTURE, TALL DARK HANDSOME STRANGERS
GOODBY, NOW.. MUST RUSH HOME AND PACK SEE YOU AT THE CLUB TONIGHT
GEE! IS SHE LUCKY!


REPORTER By Hal Messick
THE CLOCK STRIKES TWELVE
HAPPY NEW YEAR
HAPPY NEW YEAR, BRENDA! SMACK
NEXT
NEXT
NEXT
NOW, DON'T LET ME BREAK UP THE PARTY BUT MY PLANE LEAVES IN 20 MINUTES
CALL A CAB, PESKY
OKE
I'LL GET YOUR THINGS, BRENDA. WE'RE ALL GOING TO THE AIRPORT WITH YOU
WHAT A WONDERFUL WAY TO START THE NEW YEAR... HMM..... WONDER WHO THAT MAN IS SITTING THERE ALONE HE'S BEEN STARING AT ME ALL EVENING
WHY!.... HE... HE'S COMING OVER TO MY TABLE
PLEASE FORGIVE ME IF I SEEM BOLD..
..... BUT I'M ALONE TONIGHT WHEN EVERYONE ELSE IS SO GAY,.....THAT I MIGHT ALSO START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT, MAY I KISS YOU TOO, LOVELY LADY?
THE CAB'S WAITING BRENDA
BETTER HURRY
TO BE CONTINUED


BRENDA'S IN THE CLOUDS IN MORE WAYS THEN ONE
I WONDER WHO HE COULD BE!
GOSH! I WOULD BE LEAVING TOWN JUST WHEN THINGS WERE GETTING EXCITING
BRENDA STARR
I SUPPOSE I MIGHT AS WELL CALL AT THE "CLOUD" AND MEET ITS EDITOR.... THE ONE THING THE BOSS MADE ME PROMISE TO DO AS SOON AS I ARRIVED HERE.....
LOOKS MORE LIKE A RESORT THEN A NEWSPAPER OFFICE
MR. LARRY NICKELS, PLEASE
OH! YOU'RE BRENDA STARR OF COURSE. WELCOME TO SUN VALLEY—MR. NICKELS LEFT WORD THAT IF YOU ARRIVED BEFORE HE RETURNED TO JOIN HIM ON SKI RUN NO. 10
BUT... I'M NOT SUCH A GOOD SKIER..... MAYBE I HAD BETTER WAIT UNTIL HE RETURNS
NONSENSE, I'M FLURRY SNOW, LARRY'S SECRETARY, AND I'LL TAKE THE RUN WITH YOU!
OH! I DON'T WANT TO TAKE YOU FROM YOUR WORK
WORK! HA! ANYTHINGS AN EXCUSE TO PLAY HERE..... OUR LITTLE NEWSPAPER IS MORE OF A HOBBY THAN A BUSINESS
SOME SECRETARY
SO IT SEEMS! YES, THIS IS A GOOFY NEWSPAPER... IT'S A GOOD THING LARRY NICKELS HAS UNLIMITED WEALTH, OR IT WOULD HAVE FOLDED MONTHS AGO— HE JUST KEEPS IT UP TO PLEASE HIS FATHER WHO CAME, AS YOU KNOW, FROM A LONG LINE OF NEWSPAPER MEN

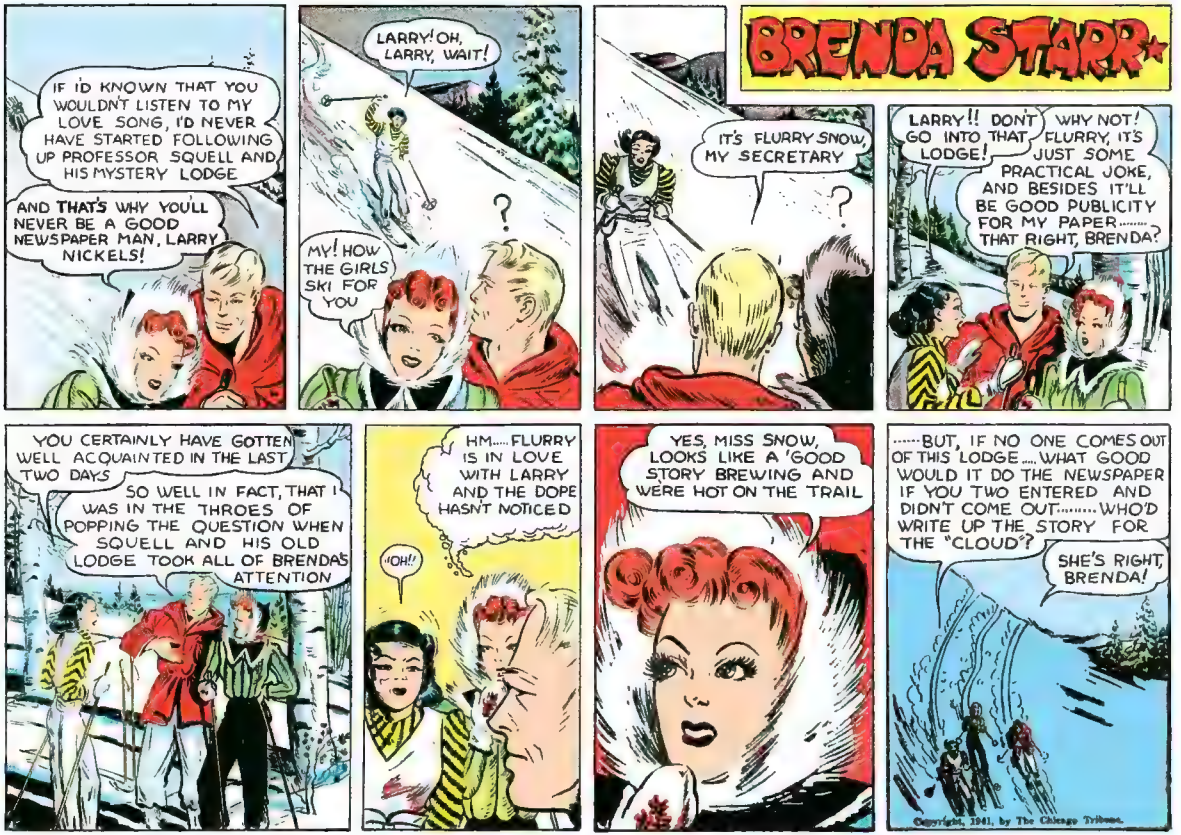
REPORTER By Dale Messick
IT MUST BE WONDERFUL TO WORK HERE!
HA! HA! YOU SAID IT!
WHEN WE TAKE VACATIONS, WE TRY TO GET A JOB FOR TWO WEEKS.... WE'RE SO BORED HAVING A GOOD TIME
WHILE YOU'RE GETTING INTO YOUR SKI SUIT, I'LL ORDER LUNCH FOR THE THREE OF US.....
LOOK OUT!
SLIP
AH! A LADY IN DISTRESS!
.....AND A BEAUTIFUL ONE, TOO..... WHAT UNDER PINNINGS!
OH! THANK YOU...
YOU!!! HOW STRANGE THAT WE SHOULD MEET AGAIN SO SOON..... WHO ARE YOU?
LARRY NICKELS, AT YOUR SERVICE, MISS STARR
TO BE CONTINUED

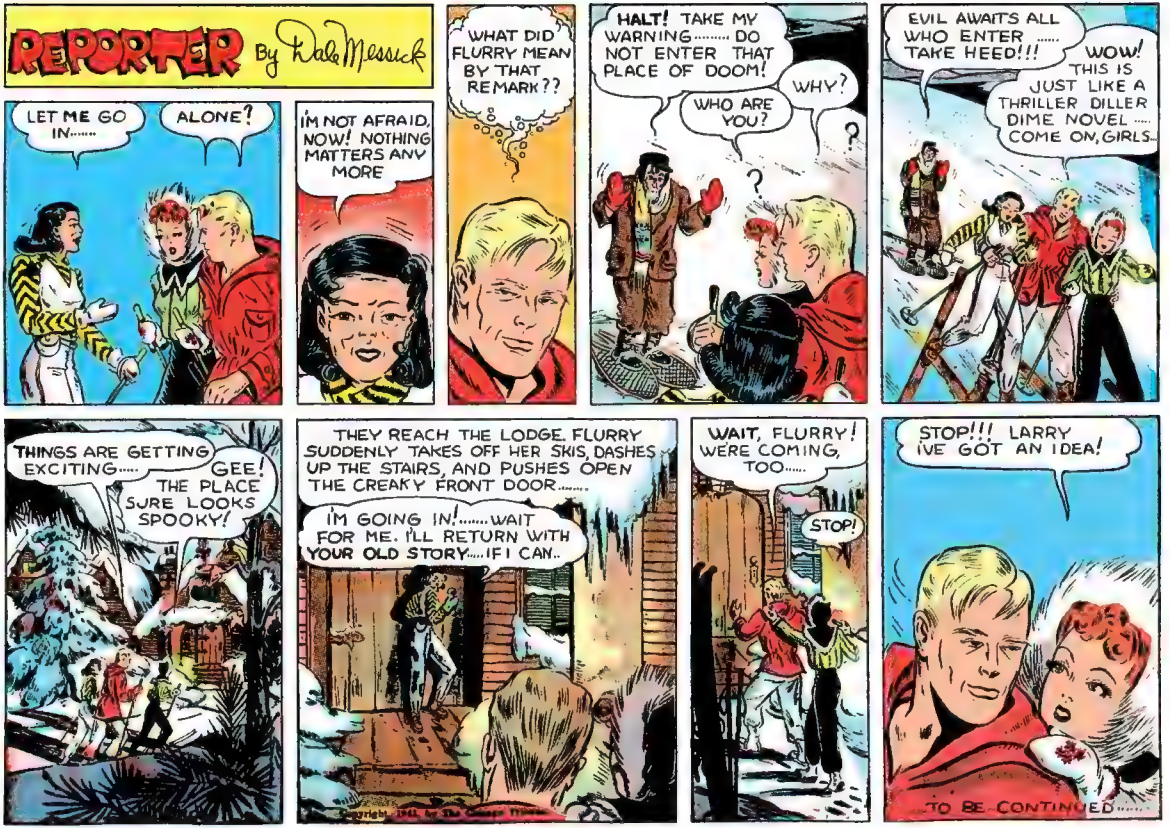

THE HANDSOME STRANGER TURNS OUT TO BE ..... LARRY NICKELS, EDITOR OF THE "CLOUD
OH! SO YOU ALREADY KNOW WHO I AM!
I'M AFRAID ILL HAVE TO CONFESS MISS STARR, THAT I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR TWO WEEKS VACATION HERE--
OH! YOU ARE?..... HOW INTERESTING!!
AS YOU NO DOUBT KNOW BY THIS TIME, I'M DUBBED THE "BLACK SHEET" IN MY VERY CONSERVATIVE NEWSPAPER FAMILY..... I LIKE THE WAY MUGGS WALTERS RUNS HIS PAPER..... THE "FLASH" HAS GUTS..... A WALLOP!!
BRENDA STARR
YES, MR. NICKELS, BUT JUST HOW DOES ALL THIS CONCERN ME?
I'M COMING TO THAT.....
THE THING I ADMIRE ABOUT YOUR BOSS MOST..... IS HIS GENIUS FOR PICKING SO BEAUTIFUL AND CLEVER A GIRL REPORTER AS YOU..... SO I TALKED HIM INTO SENDING YOU HERE TO GIVE MY PAPER NEW LIFE ...
BUT, NEW YEAR'S EVE YOU WERE SO SAD.....
HA! HA!....OH, THAT WAS PART OF MY LITTLE ACT..... JUST TO GIVE YOU A THRILL!
HOW VERY CLEVER OF YOU..... I THOUGHT THE WHOLE INCIDENT VERY SILLY... GOODBY MR. NICKELS!
OH!
SLIP
YOU..... YOU..... LET ME GO!!!

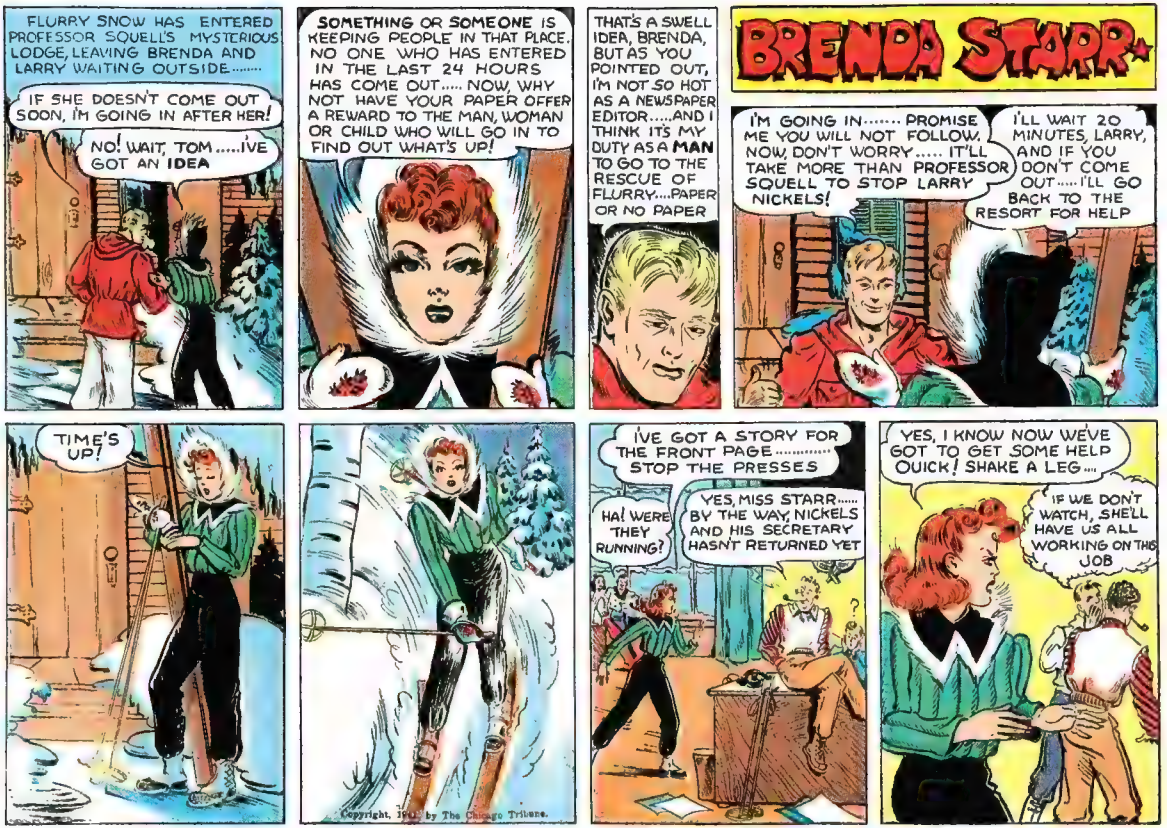

REPORTER By Dale Messick
OKE!
LATER, WE FIND BRENDA IN THE DELUXE SUITE IN THE VALLEY'S MOST EXCLUSIVE LODGE
THE NERVE OF THAT GUY! JUST BECAUSE HE'S ROLLING IN DOUGH, HE THINKS HE CAN HAVE ANY ONE HE WANTS ON HIS STUPID PAPER..... WELL, I'LL.....
SHOW HIM..... I'M TAKING THE NEXT PLANE BACK TO NEW YORK!
..... BUT FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO TRY THE SKI RUNS, AND THE SKATING.... AND..... SWIMMING IN THE OUTDOOR POOLS.... AND.....
KNOCK KNOCK
FLOWERS FOR BRENDA STARR!
OH! HOW BEAUTIFUL!
HERE'S A NOTE!
AH! MOST DAZZLING OF STARRS:— PLEASE GIVE THE "CLOUD" OF SUN VALLEY A SILVER LINING BY ACCEPTING MY OFFER AS STARR REPORTER ON MY PAPER FOR TWO WEEKS AT $1000 PER WEEK
Larry Mickelby
WOULD YOU TAKE THE JOB IF YOU WERE BRENDA?

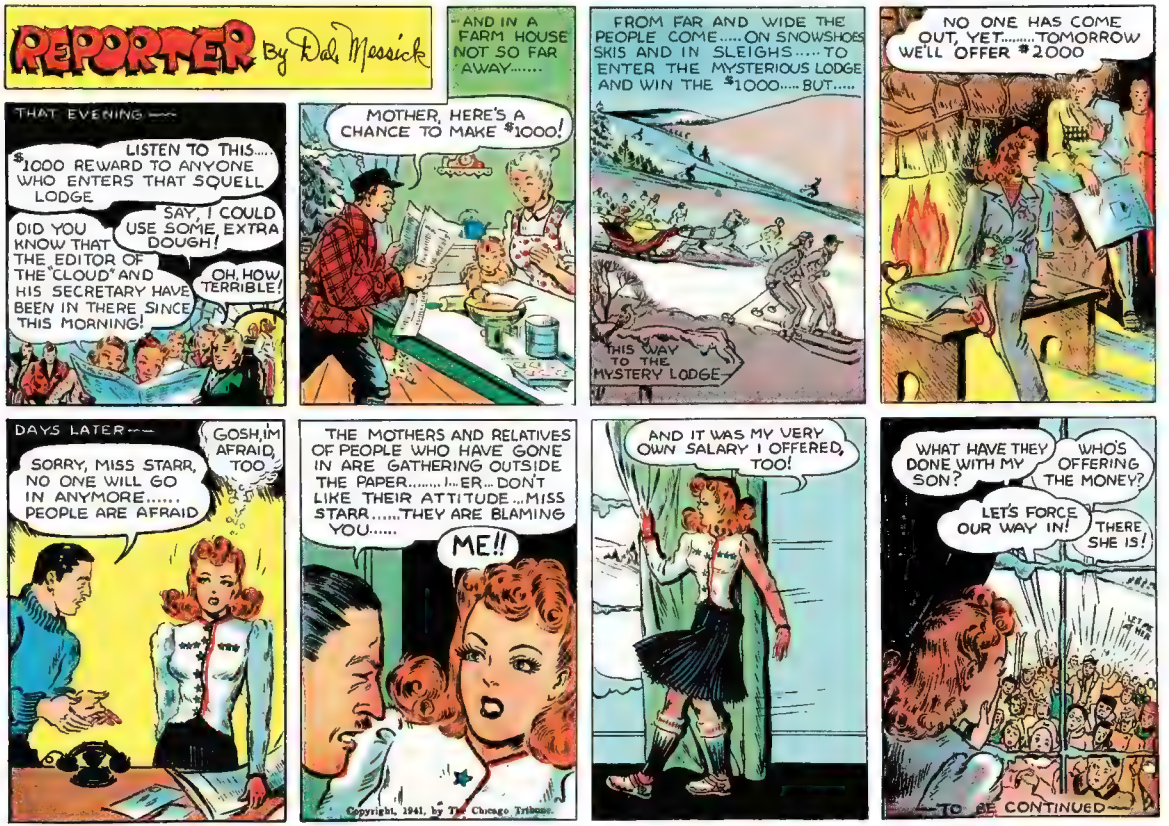
LOOKS AS THOUGH BRENDA TOOK THE JOB AND SHE IS NOW STAR REPORTER ON THE "CLOUD"
YOU'RE GREAT, BRENDA. I NEVER KNEW ANYONE TO CATCH ON SO QUICKLY
THANKS, BUT WHEN DO WE WORK? HOW CAN I GIVE THE "CLOUD" NEW LIFE IF I PLAY ALL DAY? AFTER ALL, I ONLY CONSENTED TO ACCEPT THIS JOB AT..... $1000 PER WEEK ON A STRICTLY BUSINESS BASIS
YOU'RE WORKING RIGHT NOW....ALL EMPLOYES OF THE CLOUD MUST BE A-ONE SKIERS..... WHY, A NEWS STORY MIGHT POP RIGHT ALONG THIS RUN ANY MINUTE
OH! YOU'RE IMPOSSIBLE!
BRENDA STARR
HERE, I GO AGAIN....
HERE'S YOUR STORY....."EDITOR OF THE 'CLOUD' FALLS HARD FOR BEAUTIFUL REPORTER." BRENDA! I'M MAD ABOUT YOU.... I'LL NEVER LET YOU GO!.....
IS THAT SO!
WILL YOU MARRY ME?
MR. NICKELS, YOU'RE WANTED ON THE 'PHONE....URGENT!
EXCUSE ME, BRENDA, BE BACK IN A SECOND. MEAN TIME, MAKE UP YOUR MIND TO BEING MRS NICKELS.

REPORTER By Dale Messick
BRENDA'S IN A HEAD SPIN.....
WOW! WHAT A STORY!
BRENDA! I KNEW YOU'D BRING ME LUCK..... AT LAST, THINGS ARE BEGINNING TO HAPPEN! HERE'S SOME NEWS!
SEE THAT BIG LODGE 'WAY OVER THERE? HERE USE THESE BINOCULARS
NOT A SINGLE PERSON HAS COME OUT OF THAT PLACE FOR 24 HOURS
THE DISTANT LODGE
TELEPHONE REPAIR MEN, DELIVERY BOYS, AND EVEN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT HAVE BEEN SENT IN TO FIND OUT WHAT'S WHAT..... AND NO ONE HAS COME OUT!
HOW STRANGE..... WHY IS THAT LODGE 'WAY OVER THERE BY ITSELF, ANYWAY?
IT HAS BEEN THERE FOR YEARS ... LONG BEFORE THIS RESORT WAS BUILT AND...
IT IS PRIVATELY OPERATED BY A QUEER OLD DUCK WHO CALLS HIMSELF "PROFESSOR SQUELL"
WELL! WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR? COME ON!!!
WHAT'S HE A PROFESSOR OF?
NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW
MAYBE IT WOULD BE PLAYING SAFE TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT PROFESSOR SQUELL
TO BE CONTINUED


IF I'D KNOWN THAT YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN TO MY LOVE SONG, I'D NEVER HAVE STARTED FOLLOWING UP PROFESSOR SQUELL AND HIS MYSTERY LODGE
AND THAT'S WHY YOU'LL NEVER BE A GOOD NEWSPAPER MAN, LARRY NICKELS!
LARRY! OH, LARRY, WAIT!
?
MY! HOW THE GIRLS SKI FOR YOU
BRENDA STARR
IT'S FLURRY SNOW, MY SECRETARY
?
LARRY!! DON'T GO INTO THAT LODGE!
WHY NOT! FLURRY, IT'S JUST SOME PRACTICAL JOKE, AND BESIDES IT'LL BE GOOD PUBLICITY FOR MY PAPER..... THAT RIGHT, BRENDA?
YOU CERTAINLY HAVE GOTTEN WELL ACQUAINTED IN THE LAST TWO DAYS
SO WELL IN FACT, THAT I WAS IN THE THROES OF POPPING THE QUESTION WHEN SQUELL AND HIS OLD LODGE TOOK ALL OF BRENDA'S ATTENTION
HM..... FLURRY IS IN LOVE WITH LARRY AND THE DOPE HASN'T NOTICED
"OH!"
YES, MISS SNOW, LOOKS LIKE A 'GOOD STORY BREWING AND WE'RE HOT ON THE TRAIL
.....BUT, IF NO ONE COMES OUT OF THIS LODGE..... WHAT GOOD WOULD IT DO THE NEWSPAPER IF YOU TWO ENTERED AND DIDN'T COME OUT..... WHO'D WRITE UP THE STORY FOR THE "CLOUD"?
SHE'S RIGHT, BRENDA!
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.


REPORTER By Dale Messick
LET ME GO IN.....
ALONE?
I'M NOT AFRAID, NOW! NOTHING MATTERS ANY MORE
WHAT DID FLURRY MEAN BY THAT REMARK??
HALT! TAKE MY WARNING..... DO NOT ENTER THAT PLACE OF DOOM!
WHO ARE YOU?
WHY?
?
?
EVIL AWAITS ALL WHO ENTER ..... TAKE HEED!!!
WOW! THIS IS JUST LIKE A THRILLER DILLER DIME NOVEL .... COME ON, GIRLS..
THINGS ARE GETTING EXCITING....
GEE! THE PLACE SURE LOOKS SPOOKY!
THEY REACH THE LODGE. FLURRY SUDDENLY TAKES OFF HER SKIS, DASHES UP THE STAIRS, AND PUSHES OPEN THE CREAKY FRONT DOOR.....
I'M GOING IN!.....WAIT FOR ME. I'LL RETURN WITH YOUR OLD STORY....IF I CAN..
WAIT, FLURRY! WE'RE COMING, TOO.....
STOP!
STOP!!! LARRY I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
TO BE CONTINUED.....


FLURRY SNOW HAS ENTERED PROFESSOR SQUELL'S MYSTERIOUS LODGE, LEAVING BRENDA AND LARRY WAITING OUTSIDE.....
IF SHE DOESN'T COME OUT SOON, I'M GOING IN AFTER HER!
NO! WAIT, TOM.....I'VE GOT AN IDEA
SOMETHING OR SOMEONE IS KEEPING PEOPLE IN THAT PLACE. NO ONE WHO HAS ENTERED IN THE LAST 24 HOURS HAS COME OUT..... NOW, WHY NOT HAVE YOUR PAPER OFFER A REWARD TO THE MAN, WOMAN OR CHILD WHO WILL GO IN TO FIND OUT WHAT'S UP!
THAT'S A SWELL IDEA, BRENDA, BUT AS YOU POINTED OUT, I'M NOT SO HOT AS A NEWSPAPER EDITOR.....AND I THINK ITS MY DUTY AS A MAN TO GO TO THE RESCUE OF FLURRY....PAPER OR NO PAPER
BRENDA STARR
I'M GOING IN..... PROMISE ME YOU WILL NOT FOLLOW. NOW, DON'T WORRY..... IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN PROFESSOR SQUELL TO STOP LARRY NICKELS!
I'LL WAIT 20 MINUTES, LARRY, AND IF YOU DON'T COME OUT.....I'LL GO BACK TO THE RESORT FOR HELP
TIME'S UP!
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.
I'VE GOT A STORY FOR THE FRONT PAGE..... STOP THE PRESSES
HA! WERE THEY RUNNING?
YES, MISS STARR..... BY THE WAY, NICKELS AND HIS SECRETARY HASN'T RETURNED YET
YES, I KNOW NOW WE'VE GOT TO GET SOME HELP QUICK! SHAKE A LEG....
IF WE DON'T WATCH, SHE'LL HAVE US ALL WORKING ON THE JOB

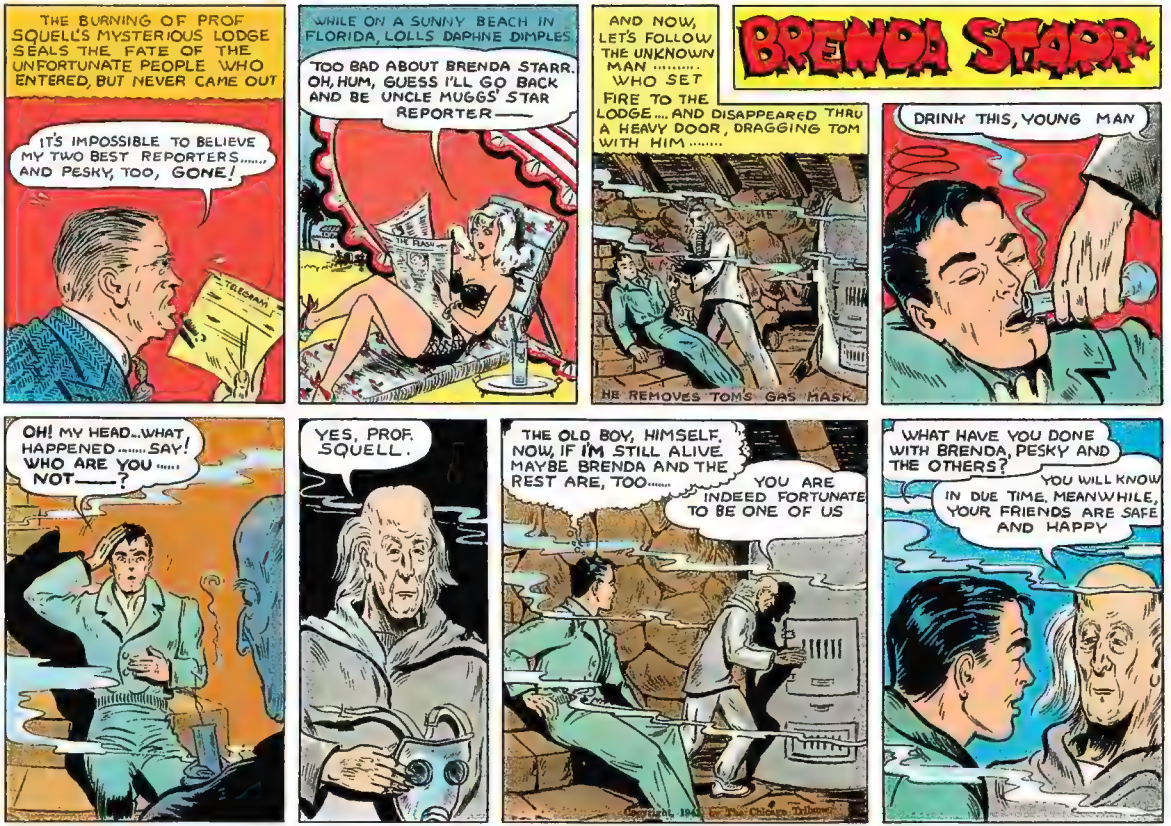

REPORTER By Dale Messick
AND IN A FARM HOUSE NOT SO FAR AWAY.....
FROM FAR AND WIDE THE PEOPLE COME.....ON SNOWSHOES SKIS AND IN SLEIGHS.....TO ENTER THE MYSTERIOUS LODGE AND WIN THE $1000.....BUT.....
NO ONE HAS COME OUT, YET.....TOMORROW WE'LL OFFER $2000
THAT EVENING---
LISTEN TO THIS.... $1000 REWARD TO ANYONE WHO ENTERS THAT SQUELL LODGE
SAY, I COULD USE SOME EXTRA DOUGH!
DID YOU KNOW THAT THE EDITOR OF THE "CLOUD" AND HIS SECRETARY HAVE BEEN IN THERE SINCE THIS MORNING!
OH, HOW TERRIBLE!
MOTHER, HERE'S A CHANCE TO MAKE $1000!
THIS WAY TO THE MYSTERY LODGE
DAYS LATER---
SORRY, MISS STARR, NO ONE WILL GO IN ANYMORE..... PEOPLE ARE AFRAID
GOSH, I'M AFRAID, TOO
THE MOTHERS AND RELATIVES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE GONE IN ARE GATHERING OUTSIDE THE PAPER.....I...ER...DON'T LIKE THEIR ATTITUDE...MISS STARR.....THEY ARE BLAMING YOU.....
ME!!
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.
AND IT WAS MY VERY OWN SALARY I OFFERED, TOO!
WHAT HAVE THEY DONE WITH MY SON?
WHO'S OFFERING THE MONEY?
LET'S FORCE OUR WAY IN!
THERE SHE IS!
TO BE CONTINUED---

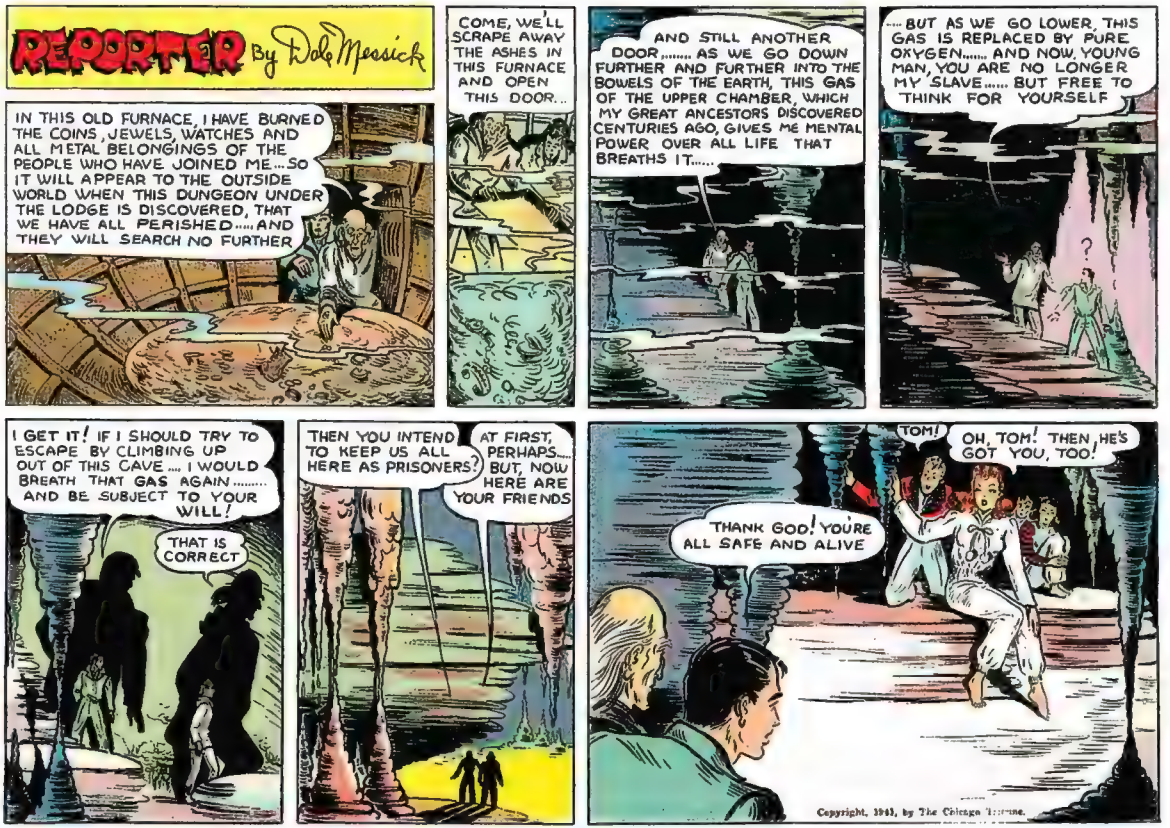
BY THIS TIME, THE WEIRD CASE OF PROFESSOR SQUELL'S LODGE WHERE PEOPLE ENTER AND DISAPPEAR... HAS ATTRACTED NATIONWIDE ATTENTION THRU NEWSPAPERS, NEWS REELS AND RADIOS, THE PLACE IS OVERRUN WITH G-MEN AND POLICE. BRENDA IS BEING HELD AS A PARTY TO A FIENDISH HOAX.....
BUT I KNOW NOTHING
BACK IN NEW YORK IN MUGGS WALTERS' OFFICE OF THE "FLASH"
TAYLOR, GET THE NEXT PLANE WEST .. BRENDA'S IN TROUBLE AGAIN!
BRENDA STARR
IT'S MY FAULT FOR LETTING THAT SCREW BALL OF A LARRY NICKELS TALK ME INTO SENDING HER OUT THERE
BRENDA HAS A GENIUS FOR GETTING INTO TROUBLE
AND AS TAYLOR SOARS THROUGH SPACE, HE HEARS THIS BROADCAST.....
FLASH..... BRENDA STARR HAS OFFERED TO GO INTO THE MSYTERY LODGE AT 2 O'CLOCK TO-DAY, TO PROVE HER INNOCENCE!
I MUST GET THERE IN TIME TO STOP HER!
HAVE YOU A FAREWELL MESSAGE
TOM'S PLANE LANDS AT THE AIRPORT.....
WHERE CAN I FIND BRENDA STARR?
SHE LEFT 10 MINUTES AGO..... YOU A FRIEND OF HERS?
THEN I'M TOO LATE?
AFRAID SO. ALL WE CAN DO NOW IS WAIT!

REPORTER By Dale Messick
CAN'T ANYTHING BE DONE?
THERE'S NO ONE LEFT AROUND HERE TO GO IN ANYMORE EXCEPT WOMEN AND CHILDREN
WE'VE DONE EVERTHING BUT BLOW THE PLACE UP.....
IT'S THE WEIRDEST THING I EVER HEARD OF WHY NOT CALL IN THE NATIONAL GUARD?
I'VE GOT TO GET TO THAT LODGE. CAN I GET A CAB?
NO LUCK, BUD..... ABOUT THE ONLY WAY YOU CAN GET THERE IS ON SKIIS
SKIIS?..... NEVER HAD A PAIR ON!
TOM TAYLOR, PAGING TOM TAYLOR
HERE, BOY, I'M TAYLOR HM....THAT'S FUNNY
IT'S A GAS MASK AND HERE'S A NOTE
WHEN YOU ENTER PROFESSOR SQUELL'S LODGE TO RESCUE BRENDA STARR, WEAR THIS GAS MASK, AND TAKE ALONG SOME ONE WITHOUT A MASK.
A FRIEND
WELL, I'LL BE ....
—TO BE CONTINUED
Copyright, 1947, by The Chicago Tribune.

TOM IS UNABLE TO GET ANY-ONE TO ENTER PROF SQUELL'S MYSTERY LODGE WITH HIM.... SO HE WIRES FOR PESKY
BOY! OH BOY, NOW THINGS ARE REALLY GOING TO HAPPEN WHEN I GET IN THAT OLD PROF'S LODGE....
THAT EVENING....TOM, WEARING THE GAS MASK, AND PESKY, ARE READY TO ENTER THE LODGE.....
ANYTHING TO SAY, TAYLOR?
HA! DOES HE THINK A GAS MASK WILL HELP?
BRENDA STARR
CHOKE
NOT A SOUL IN HERE. IT'S AS STILL AS A TOMB!
CHOKE
WAIT, PESKY! NOT SO FAST TAKE IT EASY!
SAY! THERE IS GAS IN HERE..... IT'S GOT PESKY..... HE GOES ON AS IF IN A TRANCE..... HE DOESN'T HEAR ME CALL HIM!
THATS WHY I WAS TOLD TO WEAR THIS GAS MASK..... NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS FOLLOW PESKY..... AND I'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS MYSTERY
I CAN'T LET PESKY OUT OF MY SIGHT!
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune

REPORTER By Dale Messick
SURE ENOUGH..... PESKY MUST BE GOING FOR A SECRET DOOR.....
AH! A GAS MASK! SO MY SECRET IS KNOWN!
I MUST ACT QUICKLY
A LEVER IS PULLED
...AND NOW..... FAREWELL..... WORLD
WHILE OUTSIDE OF THE LODGE AS THE PEOPLE SILENTLY WAIT
HEY! LOOK AT THE SMOKE.....
THE PLACE IS ON FIRE!
WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING WITH NO FIRE FIGHTERS!
Copyright 1941 by The Chicago Tribune.
OH! HELP, HELP, MY BOYS IN THERE!
MY HUSBAND
HOLD HER--SHE CAN'T GO IN THAT FURNACE
.....AND WHILE A FRANTIC HYSTERICAL CROWD LOOKS ON, HELPLESS, PROF. SQUELL'S MYSTERIOUS LODGE BURNS TO THE GROUND.....
TO BE CONTINUED


THE BURNING OF PROF SQUELL'S MYSTERIOUS LODGE SEALS THE FATE OF THE UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE WHO ENTERED, BUT NEVER CAME OUT
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE MY TWO BEST REPORTERS..... AND PESKY, TOO, GONE!
TELEGRAM
WHILE ON A SUNNY BEACH IN FLORIDA, LOLLS DAPHNE DIMPLES
TOO BAD ABOUT BRENDA STARR. OH, HUM, GUESS I'LL GO BACK AND BE UNCLE MUGGS' STAR REPORTER——
AND NOW, LET'S FOLLOW THE UNKNOWN MAN ..... WHO SET FIRE TO THE LODGE.... AND DISAPPEARED THRU A HEAVY DOOR, DRAGGING TOM WITH HIM .....
BRENDA STARR
HE REMOVES TOM'S GAS MASK
DRINK THIS, YOUNG MAN
OH! MY HEAD...WHAT HAPPENED.....SAY! WHO ARE YOU ..... NOT——?
YES, PROF. SQUELL.
THE OLD BOY, HIMSELF. NOW, IF I'M STILL ALIVE, MAYBE BRENDA AND THE REST ARE, TOO.....
YOU ARE INDEED FORTUNATE TO BE ONE OF US
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH BRENDA, PESKY AND THE OTHERS?
YOU WILL KNOW IN DUE TIME. MEANWHILE, YOUR FRIENDS ARE SAFE AND HAPPY


REPORTER By Dale Messick
IN THIS OLD FURNACE, I HAVE BURNED THE COINS, JEWELS, WATCHES AND ALL METAL BELONGINGS OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE JOINED ME...SO IT WILL APPEAR TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD WHEN THIS DUNGEON UNDER THE LODGE IS DISCOVERED, THAT WE HAVE ALL PERISHED.....AND THEY WILL SEARCH NO FURTHER
COME, WE'LL SCRAPE AWAY THE ASHES IN THIS FURNACE AND OPEN THIS DOOR...
AND STILL ANOTHER DOOR..... AS WE GO DOWN FURTHER AND FURTHER INTO THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH, THIS GAS OF THE UPPER CHAMBER, WHICH MY GREAT ANCESTORS DISCOVERED CENTURIES AGO, GIVES ME MENTAL POWER OVER ALL LIFE THAT BREATHS IT.....
.....BUT AS WE GO LOWER, THIS GAS IS REPLACED BY PURE OXYGEN..... AND NOW, YOUNG MAN, YOU ARE NO LONGER MY SLAVE..... BUT FREE TO THINK FOR YOURSELF
?
I GET IT! IF I SHOULD TRY TO ESCAPE BY CLIMBING UP OUT OF THIS CAVE.... I WOULD BREATH THAT GAS AGAIN..... AND BE SUBJECT TO YOUR WILL!
THAT IS CORRECT
THEN YOU INTEND TO KEEP US ALL HERE AS PRISONERS?
AT FIRST, PERHAPS... BUT, NOW HERE ARE YOUR FRIENDS
TOM!
OH, TOM! THEN HE'S GOT YOU, TOO!
THANK GOD! YOU'RE ALL SAFE AND ALIVE
Copyright, 1943, by The Chicago Tribune.

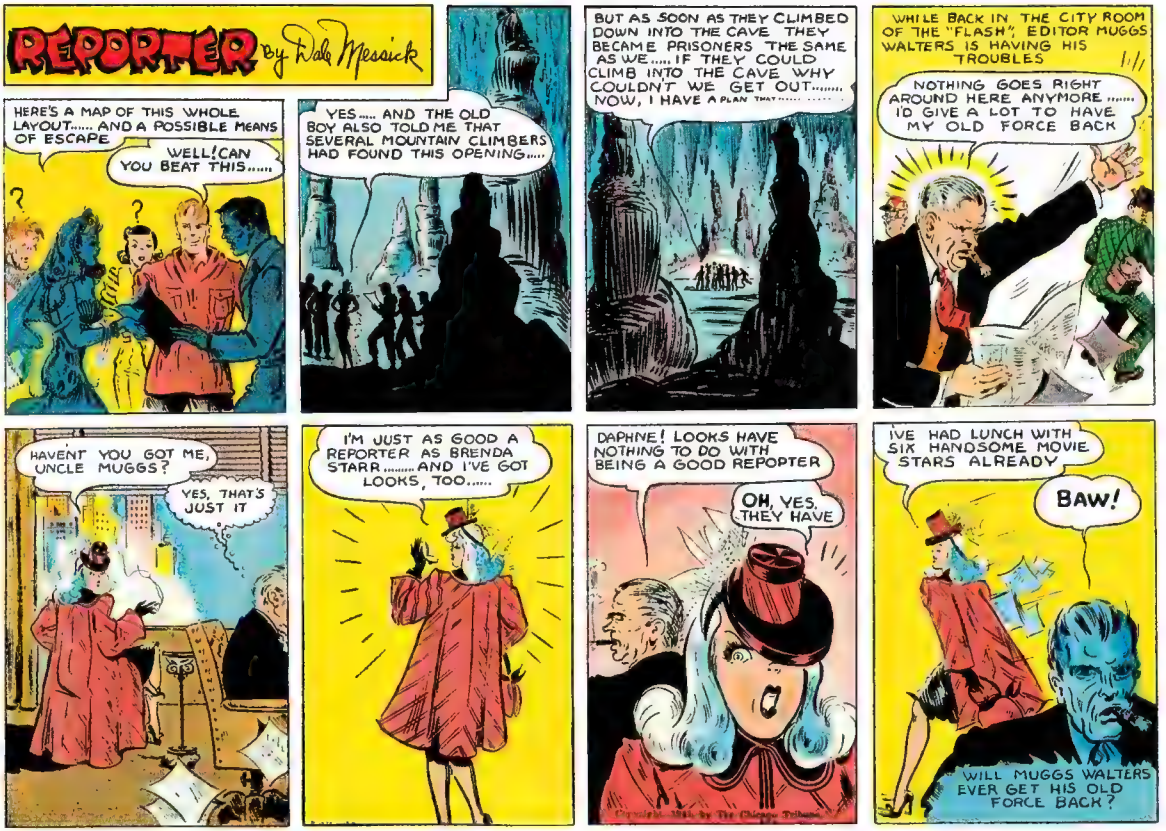
THE ECCENTRIC PROFESSOR SQUELL'S PRISONERS ARE IN HIS SECRET UNDERGROUND CAVE.
TRAPPED LIKE A BUNCH OF RATS!
--AND IF WE CLIMB TO A HIGHER LEVEL.....
ZOWIE!...RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES, WE GET THE PROF'S PERSONALITY GAS, AND BACK WE'LL COME AS MEEK AS LAMBS
WHO EVER SENT ME THE GAS MASK JUST BEFORE I ENTERED THE LODGE.....KNEW SOMETHING
BUT! NICKELS, YOU'RE THE GUY THAT'S RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THIS
?
I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND YOU, TAYLOR
BRENDA STARR
YOU GOT BRENDA OUT HERE, DIDN'T YOU? WHAT FOR?
WHY, TOM, LARRY WANTS TO MARRY ME
SO DO I, BRENDA
AH! I HAVE COMPETITION
GOSH! I'D LIKE TO BE THY BLUSHING GROOM, TOO!
MY!
WELL, I CAN SEE I'LL HAVE TO CHOOSE
...AND I'VE DECIDED YOU'RE ALL TOO EAGER.....I'D LIKE A MAN THAT'S HARD TO GET
WAIT! HOLD EVERYTHING. I'VE GOT A SWELL IDEA ON HOW WE MIGHT GET OUT OF THIS CAVE!
IT BETTER BE A GOOD ONE, PESKY.. I CAN STILL TASTE THE LAST ONE

REPORTER By Dale Messick
LET BRENDA VAMP THE PROFESSOR, AND TRY TO GET THE SECRET OF THE MYSTERIOUS GAS..... HASN'T SHE GOT ALL OF US IN HER POWER WITHOUT EVEN TRYING?
WHY! YOU LITTLE.....
RELAX, FELLOWS..... FOR ONCE BRENDA CAN'T FIND ANYTHING TO THROW!
PERSONALLY, I THINK THE WHOLE CONVERSATION IS DISGUSTING. I'M GOING TO TAKE A SWIM IN THAT POOL I SAW AROUND THE CORNER
-AND I'LL JOIN YOU, FLURRY
GEE! WE'RE SO FAR DOWN IN THE EARTH THAT IT'S ALMOST HOT
GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO USE OUR SKI UNDIES FOR BATHING SUITS
HOW'S THE WATER?
SWELL!
DUCK! HERE COMES THE PROFESSOR!
IT PLEASES ME TO SEE MY CHILDREN HAPPY
YOU KNOW, FLURRY, ALL JOKING ASIDE..... MAYBE PESKY'S IDEA ISN'T SO BAD
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.
MAR. 2
I MIGHT FIND A WAY FOR ALL OF US TO GET OUT OF THIS CAVE BY GETTING IN GOOD WITH PROF. SQUELL

BRENDA PRETENDS SHE IS REALLY INTERESTED IN THE MAD PROFESSORS PLAN OF A NEW WAY OF LIFE IN THE UNDERGROUND CAVE.....
BUT, PROFESSOR SQUELL, HOW CAN WE BE INDEPENDENT OF THE OUT SIDE WORLD?
WELL SOON HAVE NO FOOD.....THEN WHAT?
WE HAVE FISH FROM OUR MANY RIVERS AND POOLS. VEGETABLES ARE GROWN IN OUR GARDENS.....
GARDENS! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO BELIEVE.....HOW CAN THERE BE GARDENS WITHOUT SUN?
BUT, MY DEAR CHILD WE HAVE SUN. COME FOLLOW ME AND YOU SHALL SEE.
BRENDA STARR
YOU ARE THE FIRST OF MY NEW GUESTS TO ACCEPT YOUR NEW LIFE..... YOUR NAME SHALL BE FIRE BRIGHT. COME, WE ENTER THE SUN CHAMBER
SO FAR, SO GOOD, THE OLD BOY HAS FALLEN FOR MY LINE
OH! LOOK, WONDERFUL SUN..... BUT..... HOW.....WHERE DOES IT COME FROM
HERE, FIRE BRIGHT, IS A CHART THAT WILL EXPLAIN THIS SEEMING PHENOMENON
POWERFUL MAGNIFYING LENSES TO GET ALL POSSIBLE RAYS OF THE SUN
SNOW COVERED MOUNTAIN WITH LARGE OPENING THROUGH WHICH SUN SHINES
GARDENS OF THE UNDERGROUND CAVE
IT'S AMAZING! BUT, SUPPOSING SOMEONE SHOULD DISCOVER THIS OPENING?.....AND YOUR SECRET BE DISCOVERED
SEVERAL OF THE VERY BRAVE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN, AND HAVE FOUND THE OPENING..... BUT, DUE TO MY SECRET GAS, WHICH GIVES ME MENTAL POWER OVER ALL LIFE THAT BREATHES IT, THEY TOO, WERE UNABLE TO LEAVE.....
GOSH! AN OPENING-...AN OPENING.....
Copyright 1949, by The Chicago Tribune.

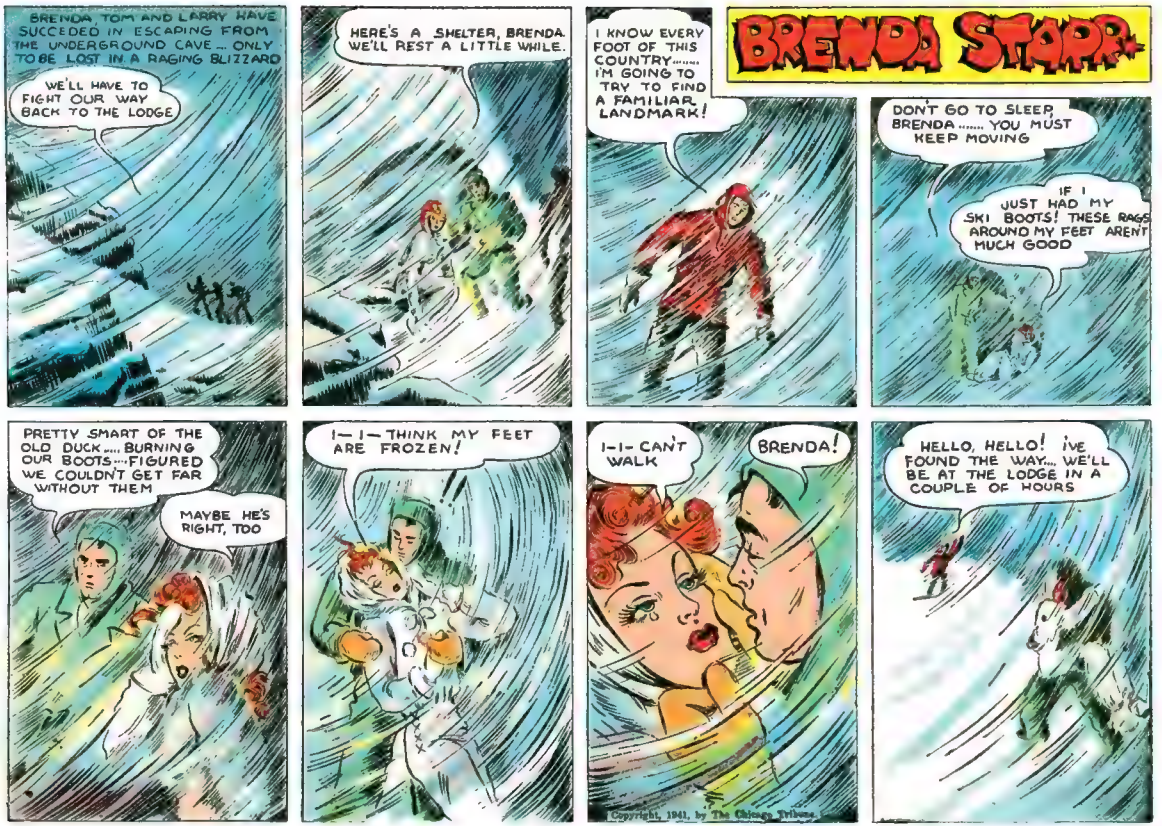
REPORTER By Dale Messick
...AND NOW YOU MUST DISCARD THE UNSIGHTLY GARMENTS OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD AND ADORN YOUR YOUNG BODY WITH BEAUTY.... ENTER....
OH!
...AND THUS BRENDA IS LEFT ALONE AS SHE PUTS ON THE WONDROUS GOWN AND JEWELS.....
BOY! HAS THIS CREATION GOT OOMH!
JUST WAIT TILL THE BOYS SEE ME IN THIS GETUP
I FEEL LIKE A PRIESTESS ABOUT TO BE OFFERED TO THE GODS AS A HUMAN SACRIFICE.....
....OR A BRIDE.....
FIRE BRIGHT, YOU HAVE CHOSEN THE BRIDAL GOWN... AND IN 4 DAYS, ALL WILL REJOICE AS YOU BECOME THE BRIDE OF PROFESSOR SQUELL!
ONLY FOUR DAYS!
Copyright, 1943, by The Chicago Tribune

ONLY FOUR DAYS MORE AND BRENDA'S TO BECOME THE BRIDE OF MAD PROFESSOR SQUELL....
SO THAT'S THE PROFESSOR'S LITTLE GAME.....WELL, HE ISN'T GOING TO FIND ME NAPPING
THROUGH THIS PAGAN IMAGE, HE CAN SEE AND HEAR ME, SO I MUST KEEP UP THE PRETENSE THAT I'M HAPPY TO BE HIS BRIDE... BUT SOME WAY I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE..... AND TELL THE OTHER PRISONERS ABOUT THE OPENING IN THIS CAVE..... HERE GOES.....
OH! IF I COULD ONLY TELL MY FRIENDS THE GOOD NEWS
BRENDA STARR
GO TELL YOUR FRIENDS OF YOUR GOOD FORTUNE..... IN MY LEFT HAND YOU WILL FIND A KEY....
GOOD, IT WORKED
THANK YOU
IT'S A GOOD THING I WAS ABLE TO HOLD ON TO THIS MAP OF THE CAVE.
ZOOM, ZOOM! GET A LOAD OF BRENDA!
WHERE'D YOU GET THAT OUTFIT?
DID YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING FROM THE PROFESSOR?
WELL, HERE I AM AT LAST!
WE THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER GET BACK
YES, I FOUND OUT P-LENTY

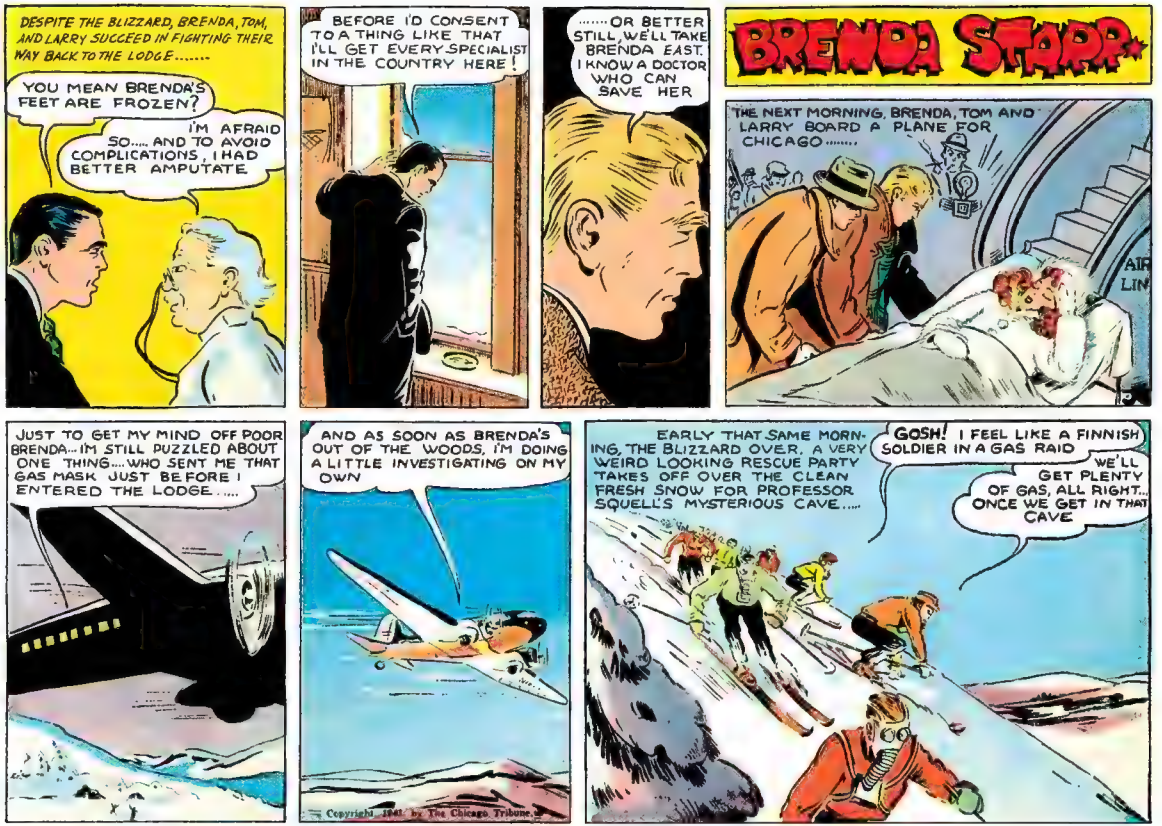

REPORTER by Dale Messick
HERE'S A MAP OF THIS WHOLE LAYOUT..... AND A POSSIBLE MEANS OF ESCAPE
WELL! CAN YOU BEAT THIS.....
YES..... AND THE OLD BOY ALSO TOLD ME THAT SEVERAL MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS HAD FOUND THIS OPENING....
BUT AS SOON AS THEY CLIMBED DOWN INTO THE CAVE THEY BECAME PRISONERS THE SAME AS WE..... IF THEY COULD CLIMB INTO THE CAVE WHY COULDN'T WE GET OUT..... NOW, I HAVE A PLAN THAT.....
WHILE BACK IN THE CITY ROOM OF THE "FLASH", EDITOR MUGGS WALTERS IS HAVING HIS TROUBLES
NOTHING GOES RIGHT AROUND HERE ANYMORE..... I'D GIVE A LOT TO HAVE MY OLD FORCE BACK
HAVENT YOU GOT ME, UNCLE MUGGS?
YES, THAT'S JUST IT
I'M JUST AS GOOD A REPORTER AS BRENDA STARR..... AND I'VE GOT LOOKS, TOO.....
DAPHNE! LOOKS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH BEING A GOOD REPOPTER
OH, YES, THEY HAVE
IVE HAD LUNCH WITH SIX HANDSOME MOVIE STARS ALREADY
BAW!
WILL MUGGS WALTERS EVER GET HIS OLD FORCE BACK?

AS THE HOUR DRAWS NEAR FOR BRENDA TO BECOME THE BRIDE OF PROFESSOR SQUELL.... THREE WEARY FIGURES HAVE REACHED THE TOP OF THE OPENING IN THE UNKNOWN CAVE..... A TERRIBLE BLIZZARD IS RAGING
AND ALL ALONE, HEAVILY VEILED, AWAITING THE DREAD MOMENT.....
?
BRENDA STARR
AT LAST THE TIME HAS ARRIVED. COME, FIRE BRIGHT, YOU MUST BEGIN YOUR WEDDING MARCH
THE WEDDING MARCH BEGINS.....
HUMM.....THERE IS SOMETHING STRANGELY CLUMSY ABOUT MY BRIDE-TO-BE THAT I HAD NOT NOTICED BEFORE
Copyright 1941 by The Chicago Tribune
FIRE BRIGHT, PLEASE REMOVE YOUR VEIL THAT I MIGHT SEE YOUR SWEET FACE BEFORE THE CEREMONY BEGINS.....
OH! OH!
WHY.... ER.... ER

REPORTER By Dale Messick
O.K. OLD BOY.....YOU ASKED FOR IT!
IMPOSTER! WHAT HAS BECOME OF FIRE BRIGHT?
YOU GOT ME PROFESSOR... ALL I KNOW IS SHE THOUGHT I'D MAKE YOU A BETTER BRIDE THAN SHE
GO AT ONCE..... SEARCH UNTIL YOU FIND HER.....
AND THROW HIM INTO IRONS..... HE'LL PAY FOR THIS INSULT.....
LET ME OUT OF HERE
OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD THE EIGHTH IS THIS..... MAN'S CONCEIT, BRENDA OUT WITTED HIM BY PLAYING UP TO HIS VANITY.....THE OLD FOOL
OH, PROFESSOR! WE FOUND THE GUARDS AT THE OPENING OF THE CAVE UNCONSCIOUS
THANK GOODNESS THEY MADE IT!
SO SHE HAS ESCAPED..... ONLY TO DIE OF EXPOSURE IN AN UNKNOWN WILDERNESS
NEXT WEEK.....THE BLIZZARD
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.

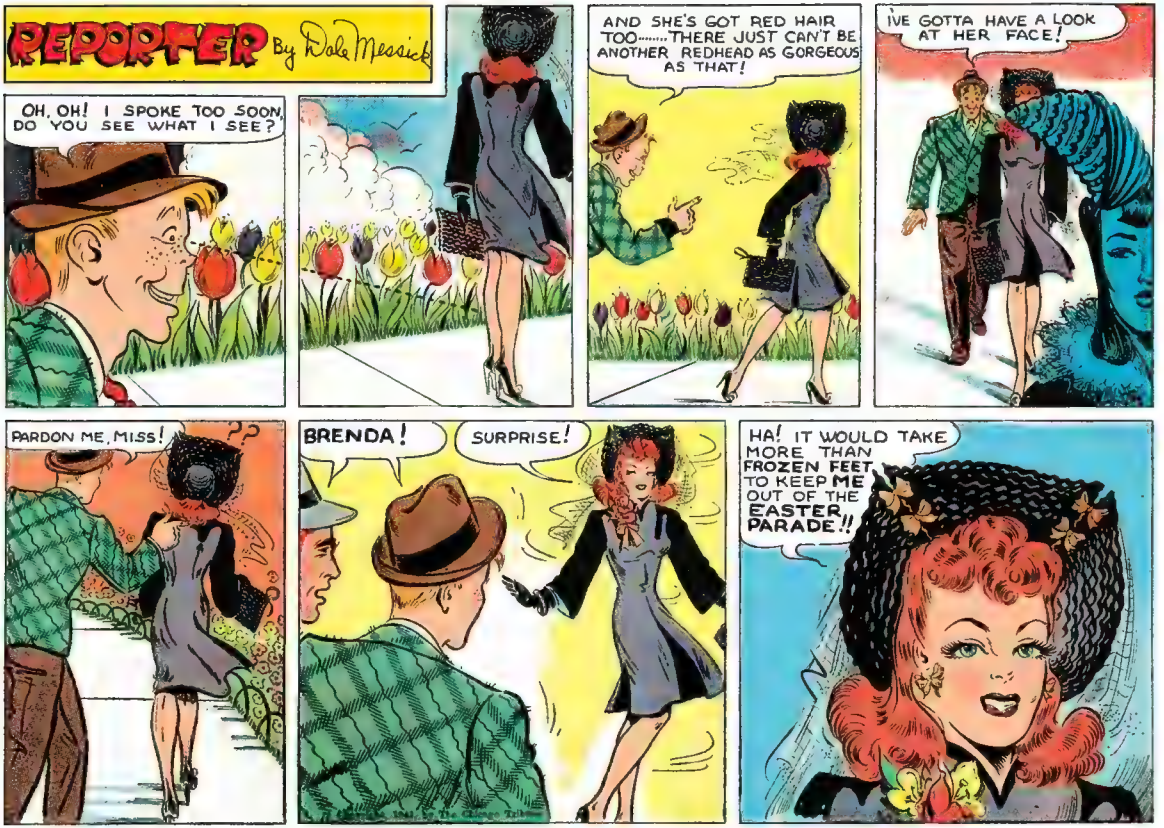

BRENDA TOM AND LARRY HAVE SUCCEDED IN ESCAPING FROM THE UNDERGROUND CAVE... ONLY TO BE LOST IN A RAGING BLIZZARD
WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT OUR WAY BACK TO THE LODGE
HERE'S A SHELTER, BRENDA. WE'LL REST A LITTLE WHILE.
I KNOW EVERY FOOT OF THIS COUNTRY..... I'M GOING TO TRY TO FIND A FAMILIAR LANDMARK!
BRENDA STARR
DON'T GO TO SLEEP BRENDA..... YOU MUST KEEP MOVING
IF I JUST HAD MY SKI BOOTS! THESE RAGS AROUND MY FEET AREN'T MUCH GOOD
PRETTY SMART OF THE OLD DUCK.... BURNING OUR BOOTS.... FIGURED WE COULDN'T GET FAR WITHOUT THEM
MAYBE HE'S RIGHT, TOO
I—I—THINK MY FEET ARE FROZEN!
I-I- CAN'T WALK
BRENDA!
HELLO, HELLO! I'VE FOUND THE WAY.... WE'LL BE AT THE LODGE IN A COUPLE OF HOURS
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune

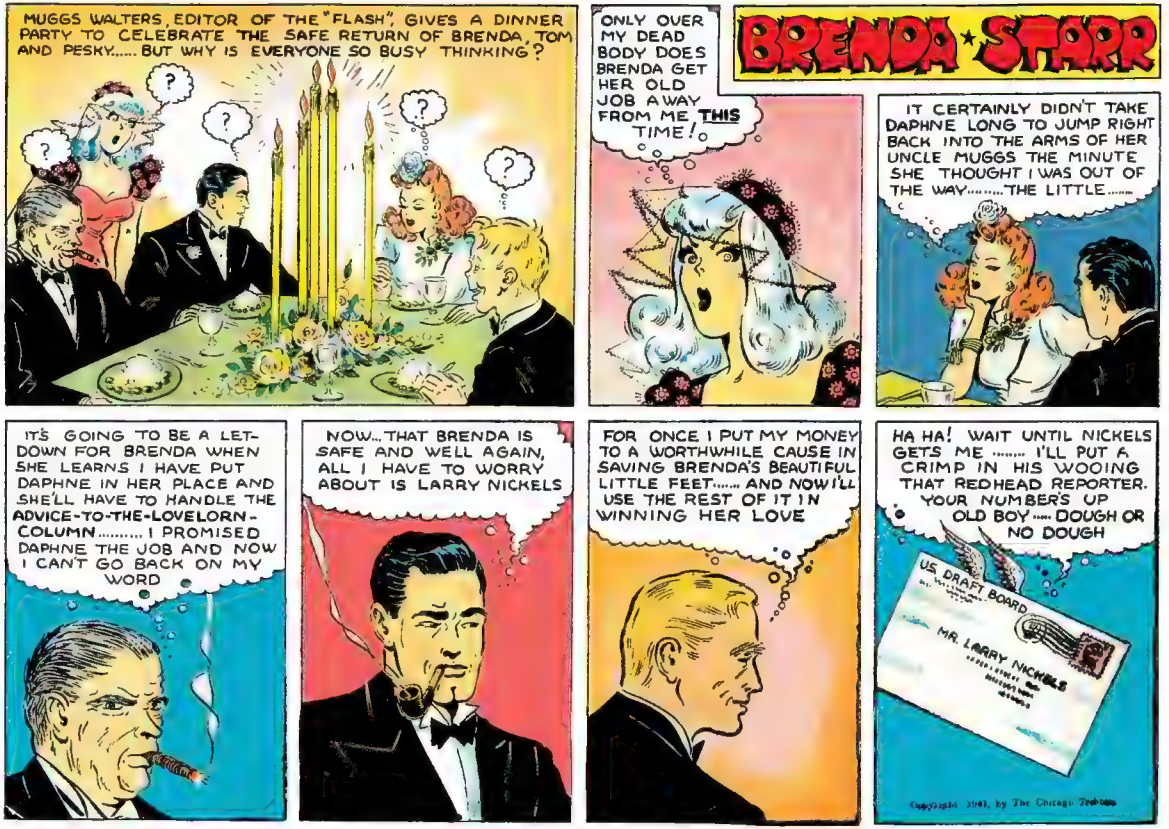
REPORTER By Dale Messick
WHAT'S WRONG WITH BRENDA?
WE'VE GOT TO GET HER TO THE LODGE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE
CARRYING BRENDA BETWEEN THEM TOM AND LARRY FIGHT THEIR WAY BACK TO CIVILIZATION
DON'T STAND THERE AND STARE.....GET A DOCTOR!
IT'S LARRY NICHOLS AND THAT GIRL REPORTER!
THEY'RE ALIVE!
BUT THEY CAN'T BE ALIVE..... I SAW THEM ENTER THAT LODGE..... I SAW IT BURN TO THE GROUND.....
IT'S UNCANNY!
MAYBE MY SON STILL LIVES!
SO IN SPITE OF THE RAGING BLIZZARD, A PARTY IS BEING ORGANIZED TO RESCUE THOSE STILL HELD PRISONERS IN PROFESSOR SQUELL'S MYSTERIOUS UNDERGROUND CAVE.....
1941, by the Chicago Tribune.
WHILE IN THE HOSPITAL LIES POOR BRENDA
DOCTOR, HOW SERIOUS IS IT?
SO SERIOUS..... THAT I'M AFRAID I'LL HAVE TO AMPUTATE
NO!
TO BE CONTINUED

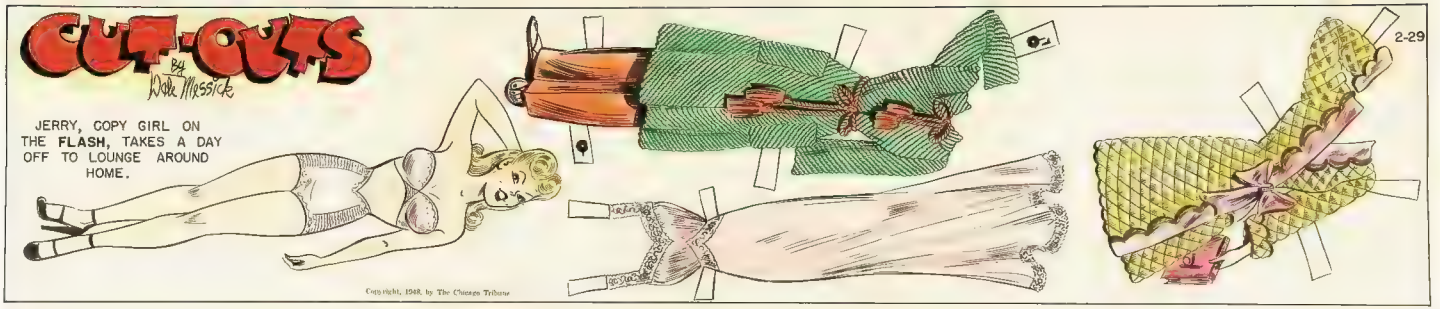

DESPITE THE BLIZZARD, BRENDA, TOM, AND LARRY SUCCEED IN FIGHTING THEIR WAY BACK TO THE LODGE.....
YOU MEAN BRENDA'S FEET ARE FROZEN?
I'M AFRAID SO..... AND TO AVOID COMPLICATIONS, I HAD BETTER AMPUTATE
BEFORE I'D CONSENT TO A THING LIKE THAT I'LL GET EVERY SPECIALIST IN THE COUNTRY HERE!
.....OR BETTER STILL, WE'LL TAKE BRENDA EAST. I KNOW A DOCTOR WHO CAN SAVE HER
BRENDA STARR
THE NEXT MORNING, BRENDA, TOM AND LARRY BOARD A PLANE FOR CHICAGO.....
JUST TO GET MY MIND OFF POOR BRENDA--IM STILL PUZZLED ABOUT ONE THING....WHO SENT ME THAT GAS MASK JUST BEFORE I ENTERED THE LODGE.....
AND AS SOON AS BRENDA'S OUT OF THE WOODS, I'M DOING A LITTLE INVESTIGATING ON MY OWN
Copyright 1941 by The Chicago Tribune.
EARLY THAT SAME MORNING, THE BLIZZARD OVER, A VERY WEIRD LOOKING RESCUE PARTY TAKES OFF OVER THE CLEAN FRESH SNOW FOR PROFESSOR SQUELL'S MYSTERIOUS CAVE.....
GOSH! I FEEL LIKE A FINNISH SOLDIER IN A GAS RAID
WE'LL GET PLENTY OF GAS, ALL RIGHT... ONCE WE GET IN THAT CAVE

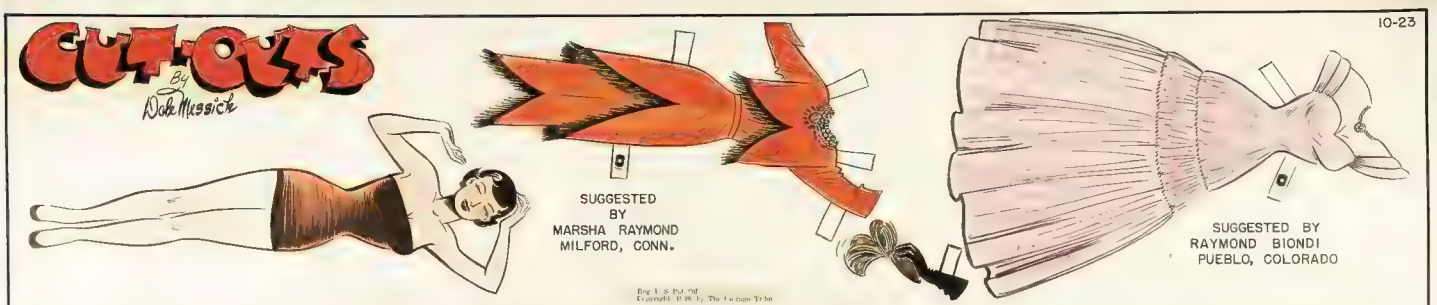
REPORTER By Dale Messick
WELL, BRENDA, I WONDER HOW PESKY MADE OUT AS THE BLUSHING BRIDE?
ON ARRIVAL IN CHICAGO, BRENDA IS RUSHED TO A HOSPITAL. THE DOCTOR DECIDES TO CALL IN TWO MORE SPECIALISTS.....
BUCK UP OLD BOY, WE'VE GOT TO CHEER BRENDA
I'M IN TERRIBLE PAIN BUT I MUST NOT LET ON TO THE BOYS
HE'S PROBABLY OUT OF THE CAVE BY THIS TIME
WELL, HE PUT IT OVER LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE US A CHANCE TO ESCAPE
HE'S SURE A GAME KID
I WONDER IF TOM AND LARRY WOULD BE SO EAGER TO MARRY ME IF MY..... FEET.....WERE.....GONE
BRENDA, DARLING, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO MATTERS TO ME
I'LL DEVOTE MY LIFE, MY FORTUNE, TO MAKE IT UP TO YOU, BRENDA.....
YOU'RE BOTH SO WONDERFUL I...I... CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT, BUT..... I COULD NEVER BE A BURDEN TO EITHER OF YOU
Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.
MR. NICKELS AND MR. TAYLOR THIS WAY PLEASE.
WHAT NOW!

EASTER SUNDAY
GEE! IT'S GREAT TO BE OUT OF THAT CAVE
...AND TO KNOW THAT BRENDA'S FEET WERE SAVED..... THANKS TO LARRY NICKELS AND HIS DOUGH
HMM..... IT'S TOO BAD THE PROFESSOR DESTROYED THE FORMULA FOR THAT MYSTERIOUS GAS BEFORE THEY CLAMPED HIM INTO THE NUT HOUSE....THINK WHAT THIS COUNTRY COULD HAVE DONE WITH IT IN CASE OF AN INVASION
BRENDA STARR
AW GEE! LET'S FORGET ABOUT THAT NOW AND ENJOY THE SIGHTS!
POOR BRENDA, IT WILL BE WEEKS BEFORE SHE'LL WALK..... BET THIS IS THE FIRST EASTER PARADE SHE EVER MISSED!
ZOOM, ZOOM! JUST LOOK AT THE CUTIES!
—Copyright, 1941, by The Chicago Tribune.
...AND NOT ONE OF THEM CAN HOLD A CANDLE TO OUR BRENDA.....

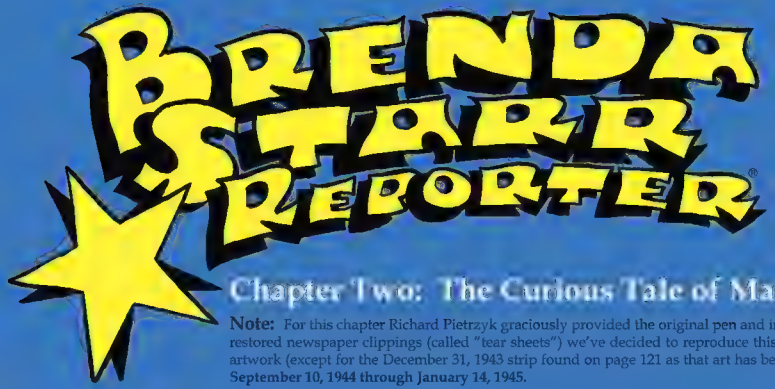

REPORTER By Dale Messick
OH, OH! I SPOKE TOO SOON, DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?
AND SHE'S GOT RED HAIR TOO.....THERE JUST CAN'T BE ANOTHER REDHEAD AS GORGEOUS AS THAT!
I'VE GOTTA HAVE A LOOK AT HER FACE!
PARDON ME, MISS!
BRENDA!
SURPRISE!
HA! IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN FROZEN FEET TO KEEP ME OUT OF THE EASTER PARADE!!


MUGGS WALTERS, EDITOR OF THE "FLASH", GIVES A DINNER PARTY TO CELEBRATE THE SAFE RETURN OF BRENDA, TOM AND PESKY..... BUT WHY IS EVERYONE SO BUSY THINKING?
?
?
?
?
?
ONLY OVER MY DEAD BODY DOES BRENDA GET HER OLD JOB AWAY FROM ME THIS TIME!
BRENDA STARR
IT CERTAINLY DIDN'T TAKE DAPHNE LONG TO JUMP RIGHT BACK INTO THE ARMS OF HER UNCLE MUGGS THE MINUTE SHE THOUGHT I WAS OUT OF THE WAY.....THE LITTLE.....
IT'S GOING TO BE A LET-DOWN FOR BRENDA WHEN SHE LEARNS I HAVE PUT DAPHNE IN HER PLACE AND SHE'LL HAVE TO HANDLE THE ADVICE-TO-THE-LOVELORN-COLUMN..... I PROMISED DAPHNE THE JOB AND NOW I CAN'T GO BACK ON MY WORD
NOW...THAT BRENDA IS SAFE AND WELL AGAIN, ALL I HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IS LARRY NICKELS
FOR ONCE I PUT MY MONEY TO A WORTHWHILE CAUSE IN SAVING BRENDA'S BEAUTIFUL LITTLE FEET..... AND NOW I'LL USE THE REST OF IT IN WINNING HER LOVE
HA HA! WAIT UNTIL NICKELS GETS ME ..... I'LL PUT A CRIMP IN HIS WOOING THAT REDHEAD REPORTER. YOUR NUMBER'S UP OLD BOY.... DOUGH OR NO DOUGH
U.S. DRAFT BOARD
MR. LARRY NICKELS
Copyright 1941, by The Chicago Tribune


CUT-OUTS
By
Dale Messick
JERRY, COPY GIRL ON THE FLASH, TAKES A DAY OFF TO LOUNGE AROUND HOME.
2-29
Copyright, 1948, by The Chicago Tribune



Above and below: original Dale Messick artwork for two *Brenda Starr* cut-outs. These "extras" accompanied the Sunday version of the strip.



Chapter Two: The Curious Tale of Mary Elizabeth Beastly

Note: For this chapter Richard Pietrzyk graciously provided the original pen and ink artwork of Dale Messick. Rather than use restored newspaper clippings (called "tear sheets") we've decided to reproduce this noteworthy story directly from the original artwork (except for the December 31, 1943 strip found on page 121 as that art has been lost). **This Chapter: Sunday strips from September 10, 1944 through January 14, 1945.**

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
WHOSE PAST HAVE YOU BEEN DIGGING UP ALL MORNING, STARR ?
SCENE—THE MORGUE ROOM OF THE FLASH
MARY ELIZABETH BEASTLY.
OH! YES, SHE KICKED OFF YESTERDAY. WONDER WHO GETS THE BEASTLY MILLIONS ?
HER DAUGHTER, MARY ELIZABETH, JUNIOR, I IMAGINE. ANYHOW, I'M GOING TO THE WILL READING TO FIND OUT.
SAY, I WONDER IF THE KID WILL COME OUT OF HIDING NOW.
THE ONLY TIME SHE WAS EVER SEEN WAS ON HER EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY, WHEN SHE CROSSED THE COUNTRY IN AN IRON LUNG. REMEMBER THE SENSATION SHE CAUSED ?
DO I? I WAS THE ONLY REPORTER WHO SAW HER
....AND SHE HAD A LOVELY FACE THAT WAS TWO YEARS AGO. SHE'S TWENTY NOW.
JUST IMAGINE BEING BEAUTIFUL, TWENTY, AND STEPPING FORTH FROM AN IRON LUNG, WITH MILLIONS. WOW !
DON'T YOU EVER READ THE PAPERS, PESKY? SHE'S NOT IN THE IRON LUNG NOW. BUT SHE'S BEEN AN INVALID EVER SINCE. GUESS HER OLD LADY HAS DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO GET HER BACK ON THE BEAM.
THAT'S THE STORY MARY ELIZABETH BEASTLY TELLS THE WORLD.
....BUT I HAVE AN IDEA.
OH! OH! HERE WE GO AGAIN !
9-10
AHHH.... BRENDA'S GOT HER NOSE TO THE GROUND !
FLAS
DO YOU SUPPOSE SHE COULD BE SENSING ANOTHER MYSTERY ?
GOULD BE ! COULD BE !

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
SCENE—LIBRARY OF THE BEASTLY THIRTY ROOM PENTHOUSE APARTMENT ATOP THE RITZ PLAZA HOTEL.
THAT MUST BE MARY ELIZABETH BEASTLY UNDER THE HEAVY VEIL.
HA! SHE ISN'T LETTING THE PRESS SEE HER FACE THIS TIME, JUST HER FIGURE.
AND SHE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE AN INVALID TO ME NOT WITH THAT BODY!
AS BRENDA AND HANK GIVE HER THE ONCE OVER, MARY ELIZABETH GRABS THE ARM OF THE MAN SEATED BESIDE HER
LOOK!
LOOK, DOCTOR PIERRE! THAT GIRL WITH THE RED HAIR! WHO IS SHE?
UNFORTUNATELY, SHE IS FROM THE NEWSPAPER.... SHE AND THAT OTHER PERSON WITH HER ARE REPORTERS I'LL HAVE THEM DISMISSED AT ONCE.
NO, NO, DOCTOR. SHE IS THE ONE!
BUT, MARY, THE WILL HASN'T BEEN READ YET.
OH! HOW CAN YOU SPEAK OF THE WILL, OR ANYTHING, WHEN....WHEN I'VE FOUND HER AT LAST!
BEFORE THE DOCTOR CAN STOP HER, MARY ELIZABETH RUSHES UP TO BRENDA.
YOU ARE A REPORTER. I KNOW YOU CAME HERE TO INTERVIEW ME. EVERYONE HERE CAME JUST TO SEE ME....
THAT'S WHY I'M WEARING THIS VEIL. I'M NOT GOING TO LET THEM SEE ME.... NOT UNTIL....
MARY, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I'M INVITING THIS REPORTER TO COME TO-MORROW TO INTERVIEW ME. AND TO SEE THAT I, ALSO, HAVE A BEAUTIFUL FACE LIKE HERS.
? ?

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
THE READING OF THE LATE MARY ELIZABETH BEASTLY'S WILL BEGINS—
AHEM---TO MY ONLY CHILD, MARY ELIZABETH, I BEQUEATH MY ENTIRE ESTATE.
....BECAUSE OF MY DAUGHTER'S ILLNESS, DOCTOR AMOS PIERRE, WHO HAS ATTENDED HER SINCE BIRTH, SHALL BE SOLE GUARDIAN OF SAID ESTATE UNTIL HE, DOCTOR AMOS PIERRE, PROCLAIMS MY DAUGHTER, MARY ELIZABETH, CURED
WHAT A STRANGE WILL FOR A MOTHER TO LEAVE FOR HER DAUGHTER!
PSST—AND LOOK AT THAT SMUG EXPRESSION ON THE DOCTOR'S FACE, TOO!
SILVER WINGS for all of us
9 24
NEXT DAY, IN THE CITY ROOM.
I'LL BET MY LAST BUCK, STARR, THAT YOU ARE NOT GETTING YOUR INTERVIEW WITH THAT BEASTLY DAME TO-DAY
KEEP YOUR MONEY, HANK. NOW THAT DOCTOR PIERRE IS IN FULL CHARGE, POOR LITTLE MARY ELIZABETH WILL, PROBABLY, NEVER SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY AGAIN.
HOWEVER, IT'S NOT GOING TO STOP ME FROM TRYING TO INTERVIEW HER.
YOU KNOW, THERE'S SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT THAT SET-UP.
I'M CONVINCED THE GIRL HAS BEEN KEPT IN SECLUSION ALL HER LIFE BY HER MOTHER AND THAT DOCTOR.
WONDER WHY!
EVEN IN DEATH THE MOTHER FIXED IT SO THAT HER DAUGHTER WOULD BE AT THE MERCY OF THAT DOCTOR.
BY THE WAY, SUPER SLEUTH, YOU BROUGHT TO JUSTICE YOUR LAST CRIMINAL BY TAKING HIS FALSE TEETH. HOW ABOUT BRINGING BACK A SCALP THIS TIME?
IMPOSSIBLE, TOM....
DOCTOR PIERRE HASN'T ANY....HE'S BALD.... !
HEY, BRENDA! THIS GENT'S A LOOKIN' FOR YOU.
I COULD NOT HELP OVERHEARING YOU, MISS STARR. I'M DEEPLY WOUNDED TO KNOW THAT I HAVE MADE SUCH AN UNFAVORABLE IMPRESSION.

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
I CAME TO GET YOU, MISS STARR. MARY ELIZABETH WAS SO AFRAID YOU WOULD NOT COME FOR THE INTERVIEW TO-DAY.
I SEE!
SHE IS A STRANGE CHILD, AND HAS TAKEN A GREAT FANCY TO YOU.
OF COURSE I'LL COME, DOCTOR. DIDN'T YOUR WARD PROMISE TO LET ME SEE HER FACE? NO REPORTER WOULD MISS THAT!
AH! SHE IS LOVELY... BUT SO FRAIL, SO VERY FRAIL.
FROM WHAT I SAW OF HER YESTERDAY, SHE SURE DIDN'T LOOK IT.
NOT PHYSICALLY.
OH!
LATER— THE DOCTOR AND BRENDA REACH THE BEASTLY APARTMENT. BRENDA SHUDDERS AT THE HORRIBLE LOOKING NURSE WHO OPENS THE DOOR.
SHE JUST HAD ANOTHER SPELL, DOCTOR.
EXCUSE ME, MISS STARR.
GOOD GRIEF! NO WONDER MARY ELIZABETH IS A MENTAL CASE, WITH A NURSE LIKE THAT!... AND TO SAY NOTHING OF DOCTOR PIERRE!
THIS SET-UP IS GETTING MORE INTERESTING BY THE MINUTE
MISS STARR, PLEASE COME.
IS SHE ALL RIGHT?
QUITE. ALL I ASK OF YOU IS TO HUMOR HER. DO WHATEVER SHE WANTS, NO MATTER HOW ABSURD IT MIGHT SEEM TO YOU.
BRENDA IS USHERED INTO A LAVISH ROOM.
I'LL LEAVE YOU NOW.
IN AN IMMENSE BED, ALMOST HIDDEN IN LACY PILLOWS, LIES MARY ELIZABETH.
DO YOU THINK I AM BEAUTIFUL?

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
DO YOU THINK I AM BEAUTIFUL ?
YES, MARY ELIZABETH, I THINK YOU ARE VERY BEAUTIFUL.
OUR BEAUTY IS LIKE DAY AND NIGHT. THERE IS ALWAYS SUNSHINE IN YOUR HAIR... AND ONLY THE MYSTERY OF NIGHT IN MY FACE.
?
I SUPPOSE THE DOCTOR HAS ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT I'M QUITE MAD....
.. AND THAT I'LL ASK YOU TO DO ABSURD THINGS, SUCH AS PUTTING ON THAT SWIM SUIT THE NURSE HAS
HERE. PUT IT ON IN THAT DRESSING ROOM.
I MIGHT AS WELL PLAY ALONG WITH THIS CRAZY OUTFIT, AND SEE WHAT THEY ARE UP TO..BUT
.. I DON'T GET THAT NURSE ANGLE AT ALL. NO ONE COULD ENDURE SUCH A HORRIBLE LOOKING PERSON AROUND UNLESS THERE WAS SOME GOOD REASON.
MODELING THE SWIM SUIT, BRENDA WALKS OUT OF THE DRESSING ROOM, WONDERING WHAT THE NEXT STEP WILL BE IN THIS STRANGE GAME WITH THE BEASTLY HEIRESS.
OH, NURSE, YOU WERE RIGHT. SHE IS THE ONE. SHE IS PERFECT FROM HEAD TO TOE!
ELIZABETH, WE HAVE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS !
IF ONLY MOTHER WERE HERE TO SHARE HER WITH US.
YE GODS ! IT SOUNDS AS THOUGH I'M GOING TO BE SERVED AS BREADED CUTLETS TONIGHT.
AT THIS MOMENT, THE DOCTOR SNEAKS UP BEHIND BRENDA.
10-8
A PERFECT FIGURE!
OH, HUMPH!
A PERFECT FACE!

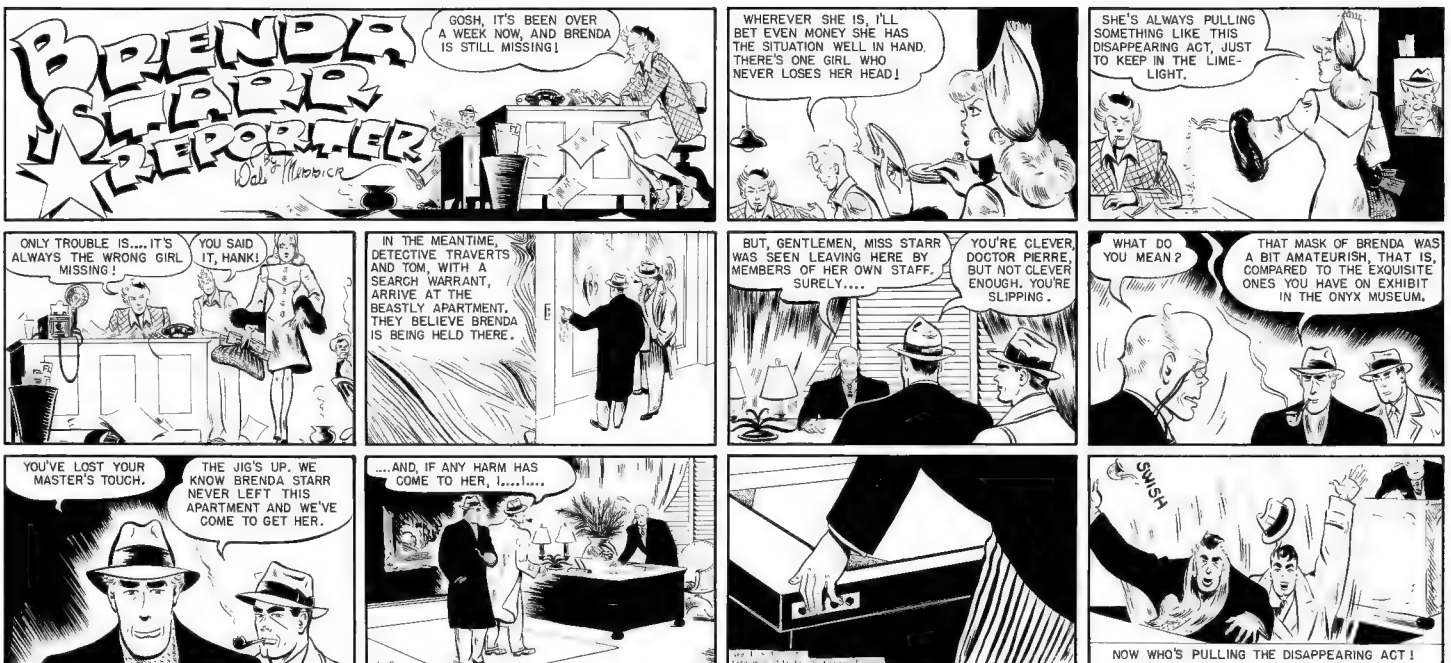
BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
VOTE FOR
THIS IS BRENDA STARR. MEET ME AT THE BEASTLY PENT-HOUSE IN HALF AN HOUR, AND BRING A PHOTOGRAPHER WITH YOU.
O.K. STARR. BY THE WAY.... HELLO! ..SHE'S HUNG UP. FUNNY, SHE WANTING ME TO HORN IN ON HER INTER-VIEW WITH THE BEASTLY GIRL!
LATER
WHY THE DIM-OUT, I WONDER?
OH, HELLO BRENDA. WHAT'S COOKIN'?
FOLLOW ME IN A TAXI! I HAVE A NEW JOB.... TELL THE PHOTOGRAPH-ER TO GO UP TO THE BEASTLY APARTMENT AND GET SOME SHOTS OF MARY ELIZABETH.
...THE PHOTOGRAPHER....HEY! BRENDA. DON'T YOU KNOW ME? I'M PETE!
OH! YES, PETE. OF COURSE.
FOLLOW THAT CAB!
I'LL GIVE YOU TEN DOLLARS IF YOU CAN LOSE THAT TAXI THAT'S FOLLOWING US.
FOR A TEN SPOT, SISTER, I'D LOSE ME-SELF.
WHAT'S GOT INTO BRENDA? NEVER KNEW HER TO ACT LIKE THAT ...HEY, YOU! THAT'S NOT THE RIGHT CAB YOU'RE FOLLOWING!
GEE, LADY. I'M AFRAID DEY GIVE US DE SLIP!
PUZZLED, HANK RETURNS TO THE FLASH.
DID BRENDA PHONE, OR ANYTHING?
NOPE....SAY, HANK. WHAT WAS EATIN' BRENDA, PULL-ING THAT SUPERIOR ACT ON US?
AND NOW, LET'S SEE JUST WHAT BRENDA IS UP TO.
YOU CAN LET ME OUT, CABBIE. HERE'S YOUR TEN DOLLARS
METER
WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW! DAT DAME'S WEARIN' A MASK!

BRENDA STARR, REPORTER
by Mabbick
24 HOURS LATER—— THEY ARE STILL WAITING TO HEAR FROM BRENDA.
I TELL YOU SHE WAS HYPNOTIZED BY THAT DOCTOR! WHY, SHE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW ME!
MAYBE IT WASN'T BRENDA. MAYBE SOMEONE ELSE WAS WEARING HER CLOTHES.
NO...IT WAS BRENDA ALL RIGHT. EVEN AS DARK AS IT WAS IN THE RITZ PLAZA LOBBY, HANK AND I BOTH SAW HER FACE.
BUT, I WILL ADMIT SHE DIDN'T ACT NATURAL!
10-22
OF COURSE THE ONLY THING THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE IS THAT DOCTOR HYPNOTIZING BRENDA. YOU SEE, PETE, THERE JUST ISN'T ANY MOTIVE.
WELL, MAYBE SHE FOUND OUT TOO MUCH OR SOMETHING.
YOU'RE ALL A BUNCH OF CREPE HANGERS. BRENDA WILL SHOW UP. TO-MORROW'S PAY DAY
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT, TOM.
SURE. DON'T YOU KNOW SHE'S ALWAYS MIXED UP IN SOME KIND OF MONKEY BUSINESS
JUST THE SAME, I'M WORRIED. I'M GOING TO CALL DETECTIVE TRAVERTS
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1944, by The Chicago Tribune
MONKEY BUSINESS IS RIGHT
GOOD GOSH! WHERE AM I?
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D LIVE TO SEE THE DAY THAT I'D WAKE UP AND FIND MYSELF STRETCHED OUT ON A MARBLE SLAB.
BRENDA STARR
LOOK IN BACK OF YOU. IT IS I, MARY ELIZABETH.
MARY ELIZABETH! WHAT ON EARTH ARE WE DOING HERE?
DOCTOR PIERRE IS GOING TO PERFORM AN OPERATION ON US.
ON US? SAY, I DON'T NEED AN OPERATION. THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH ME.
BUT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME.

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
SO DOCTOR PIERRE IS GOING TO OPERATE ON US ...?
WHY ME, MARY ELIZABETH? THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH ME.
BUT THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME?
DOCTOR PIERRE IS A GREAT SURGEON. HE HAS DEVOTED HIS LIFE'S CAREER TO ME..AND, NOW THAT WE HAVE FOUND YOU, HE IS READY TO PERFORM HIS GREAT EXPERIMENT.
..AND SLIPPING FROM THE MARBLE SLAB, MARY ELIZABETH STANDS BEFORE BRENDA.
LOOK AT ME!
?
THESE ARE NOT HANDS. THEY ARE CLAWS....ONLY MY FACE IS PERFECT.
YOU...YOU POOR CHILD!
DOCTOR PIERRE IS GOING TO GIVE ME YOUR BEAUTIFUL BODY.
THEN I'LL BE LIKE OTHER GIRLS, AND NOT A FREAK ANY MORE.... JUST THINK! I CAN WALK OUT INTO THE WORLD, FREE. I CAN WEAR MY JEWELS ON MY LOVELY HANDS.... GOLDEN SLIPPERS ON MY FEET...
BUT WHAT ABOUT ME?..THAT IS, WHAT'S LEFT OF ME.... DOES MY HEAD GET YOUR BODY?
OH, NO! I WOULDN'T WISH THIS HORRIBLE BODY ON ANYONE.
Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. Copyright 1954 by The Chicago Tribune
THEN WHAT HAPPENS TO MY HEAD? SURELY THE GREAT DOCTOR PIERRE ISN'T GOING TO WASTE A PERFECTLY GOOD HEAD!
NO, MISS STARR.... I GET YOUR BEAUTIFUL FACE!
GULP!
10-29
THEN I WON'T HAVE TO WEAR THIS MASK ANY MORE!
YE GODS! IT'S I!!!
WHO IS THIS MASKED WOMAN?

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU WEARING MY CLOTHES, AND A MASK OF MY FACE?
I WORE THIS DISGUISE TO TO ESTABLISH AN ALIBI.
AN ALIBI?
YES ...IN YOUR CLOTHES AND THIS MASK, I WAS SEEN LEAVING THIS HOTEL BY A WOMAN REPORTER AND A PHOTOGRAPHER FROM YOUR PAPER. THEY THOUGHT I WAS YOU.
HERE'S THE HEADLINE IN YOUR NEWSPAPER.
FLASH
FLASH REPORTER MISSING
LAST SEEN LEAVING RITZ PLAZA HOTEL
WE HAVE THE PERFECT ALIBI, MISS STARR. WE CAN NOW BEGIN OUR GREAT EXPERIMENT.
SO I'VE BEEN INFORMED. I'M THE LONG SOUGHT AFTER "SPARE PARTS" THAT WILL MAKE MARY ELIZABETH A PIN-UP GIRL!
BUT, BEFORE YOU START HACKING AWAY, DOCTOR, WHO IS THIS GIRL WEARING A MASK OF ME? I'M CURIOUS TO SEE THE FACE MY FACE WILL REPLACE.
DID DOCTOR PIERRE SAY A PERFECT ALIBI?
WHY ARE YOU SO SURE, CABBIE, THAT THE GIRL WE THOUGHT WAS BRENDA, LEAVING THE RITZ PLAZA, WAS SOMEONE ELSE WEARING A MASK OF BRENDA'S FACE?
BECAUSE, SIR, I WORK NIGHTS AT THE OLD OPERA HOUSE.
AND I JUST KNOW A MASK WHEN I SEES ONE.
HMMM
GOOD GRIEF! IF THIS GUY'S RIGHT, IT CAN MEAN BRENDA NEVER LEFT THE BEASTLY APARTMENT!
THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE! BRENDA MAY BE IN DANGER. I'LL GET A SEARCH WARRANT AND START INVESTIGATIONS AT ONCE.
I JUST CAN'T FIGURE WHY THEY WOULD BE HOLDING BRENDA.
WHAT'S SO BAFFLING ABOUT THAT?
I JUST CAN'T FIGURE ANYONE NOT HOLDING BRENDA....IF THEY HAD THE CHANCE!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
I'VE ALWAYS BEEN WARNED I'D LOSE MY HEAD SOME DAY.... FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING, OF COURSE.
BRENDA IS LEFT ALONE WITH MARY ELIZABETH AND THE MASKED GIRL
MISS STARR, I DO ADMIRE YOUR LACK OF FEAR. MOST GIRLS WOULD BE TERRIFIED IF THEY HAD TO GIVE UP THEIR FACES AND BODIES.
IT WILL BE INCONVENIENT.
ALL I ASK BEFORE I DIE, MARY ELIZABETH, IS THE IDENTITY OF THIS GIRL, WHO IS WEARING A MASK OF MY FACE. WHO IS SHE?
I AM MARY ELIZABETH BEASTLY. I AM THE GIRL YOU SAW AT THE READING OF MY MOTHER'S WILL.... REMEMBER, I WORE A HEAVY VEIL OVER MY FACE.
??
THEN WHO ARE YOU?
I AM ALSO MARY ELIZABETH !
??
AT THIS STARTLING REMARK, THE GIRL REMOVES THE MASK....
THE NURSE !
YOU SEE, MISS STARR, TOGETHER WE MAKE ONE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN. SEPARATED, WE ARE TERRIBLE FREAKS.
OUR DEAR, DEPARTED MOTHER CONSIDERED US AS ONE PERSON. NO ONE, EXCEPT DOCTOR PIERRE, EVER KNEW WE WERE TWINS.
BEASTLY TWINS!
BOY! THIS IS MARVELOUS. WHAT A STORY....WOW !
YOU ARE THE FIRST ONE TO KNOW OUR SECRET..
...AND THE LAST, YOU WILL NEVER LIVE TO TELL THE WORLD, OR PUT IT IN YOUR PAPER.
OH, GOSH! YOU CAN HAVE THIS BODY. TAKE THIS FACE. BUT PLEASE, PLEASE, DON'T TAKE THE MOST COLOSSAL FRONT PAGE SCOOP A GIRL REPORTER EVER HAD!!!
AH! MAN ! THERE'S A REAL REPORTER !!!


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
GOSH, IT'S BEEN OVER A WEEK NOW, AND BRENDA IS STILL MISSING!
WHEREVER SHE IS, I'LL BET EVEN MONEY SHE HAS THE SITUATION WELL IN HAND. THERE'S ONE GIRL WHO NEVER LOSES HER HEAD!
SHE'S ALWAYS PULLING SOMETHING LIKE THIS DISAPPEARING ACT, JUST TO KEEP IN THE LIME-LIGHT.
ONLY TROUBLE IS.... IT'S ALWAYS THE WRONG GIRL MISSING!
YOU SAID IT, HANK!
IN THE MEANTIME, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS AND TOM, WITH A SEARCH WARRANT, ARRIVE AT THE BEASTLY APARTMENT. THEY BELIEVE BRENDA IS BEING HELD THERE.
BUT, GENTLEMEN, MISS STARR WAS SEEN LEAVING HERE BY MEMBERS OF HER OWN STAFF. SURELY....
YOU'RE CLEVER, DOCTOR PIERRE, BUT NOT CLEVER ENOUGH. YOU'RE SLIPPING.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THAT MASK OF BRENDA WAS A BIT AMATEURISH, THAT IS, COMPARED TO THE EXQUISITE ONES YOU HAVE ON EXHIBIT IN THE ONYX MUSEUM.
YOU'VE LOST YOUR MASTER'S TOUCH.
THE JIG'S UP. WE KNOW BRENDA STARR NEVER LEFT THIS APARTMENT AND WE'VE COME TO GET HER.
....AND, IF ANY HARM HAS COME TO HER, I....I....
SWISH
NOW WHO'S PULLING THE DISAPPEARING ACT!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
I MUST BEGIN MY GREAT EXPERIMENT AT ONCE.
DETECTIVE TRAVERTS AND TOM TAYLOR HAVE JUST FALLEN THROUGH A TRAP DOOR IN THE BEASTLY PENTHOUSE.
OH! HILDA ... HELP AT LAST!
LAUNDRY CHUTE
SURE AN' IT 'AD BETTER BE 'ELP, AN' NOT MORE DAIRTY SHEETS.
THE BOYS, NONE THE WORSE BY THEIR FREE RIDE, PICK THEMSELVES OUT OF THE LAUNDRY.
OH! IT'S THAT GREAT DETECTIVE TRAVERTS. ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A CLUE?
NO, MY LITTLE PILLOW PIGEON, I'M LOOKING FOR MY PIPE.
WHILE BACK IN THE CITY ROOM—
COME ON, PESKY. LETS GET OVER TO THE RITZ PLAZA AND SEE WHAT LUCK THE BOYS ARE HAVING.
OK
....EVEN COUSIN ABREATHA WAITS ACROSS THE STREET....SIPPING SODAS AS SHE WAITS.
NO WONDER THERE ARE SHORTAGES!
MENU
DOCTOR PIERRE, HAVING DISPOSED OF HIS TORMENTORS, RETURNS TO HIS LABORATORY.
MARY AND ELIZABETH. THE TIME HAS COME. GET MISS STARR READY, WHILE I PREPARE THE LAST MINUTE DETAILS IN THE OPERATING ROOM.
IF I'M NOT BEING TOO NOSEY, WHO WILL ASSIST THE DOCTOR WHILE HE REARRANGES US GIRLS?
DOCTOR PIERRE DOES NOT NEED ANY ASSISTANCE.
GOOD GRIEF! YOU CAN'T BELIEVE THAT HE WOULD BE CAPABLE OF ATTEMPTING SUCH A THING SINGLE-HANDED. THE MAN IS MAD!
WE HAVE COMPLETE FAITH IN DOCTOR PIERRE.
GIRLS, LISTEN TO ME! NOT ONLY WILL I DIE, BUT YOU, TOO....BOTH OF YOU. GIVE ME A CHANCE TO PROVE THAT HIS EXPERIMENT CAN'T SUCCEED.
HOW COULD YOU PROVE IT?
UNTIE ME....BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!
? ?
MARY, SHOULD WE FREE MISS STARR?

BRENDA STARR REPORTED
Dale Messick
DOCTOR PIERRE HAS KEPT YOU POOR GIRLS IN IGNORANCE OF THE REAL MIRACLES THAT HAVE BEEN PERFORMED IN SURGERY....
GOOD HEAVENS! IS BRENDA STILL ON THAT MARBLE SLAB?
EVEN IF HE WERE SUCCESSFUL IN TRANSPLANTING MY GOOD POINTS OVER TO YOU, COULD YOU GIRLS BE HAPPY KNOWING YOU WERE THIEVES AND MURDERERS?
BESIDES, MY VERY DEAREST FRIEND IS THE GREAT DETECTIVE TRAVERTS.... DO YOU THINK HE WOULD REST BEFORE HE HAD TRACED DOWN MY KILLERS? NO! NO! A THOUSAND TIMES NO!
GOLLY, I DO THINK I'VE GOT THEM WORRIED.
I KNOW OF TWO BRILLIANT, YOUNG PLASTIC SURGEONS. AND SAY, THIS IS A COINCIDENCE! THEY ARE ALSO TWINS. THE RAYO BROTHERS...WHY NOT CONSULT THEM BEFORE YOU.... YOU.... SLAUGHTER ME?
WE NEVER HEARD OF THE RAYO BROTHERS.
THERE! THAT PROVES THE DOCTOR HAS KEPT YOU IN THE DARK...EVERYONE KNOWS OF THE GREAT RAYO BROTHERS.
MARY, I'M GOING TO SET MISS STARR FREE.
NO, WAIT!
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
Copyright 1944 by The Chicago Tribune
HE WHO HESITATES IS LOST. NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT!
AS IF HYPNOTIZED BY BRENDA'S STIRRING SPEECH, THE BEASTLY TWINS RELEASE HER.
AT THIS MOMENT DOCTOR PIERRE RETURNS.... BRENDA LEAPS FROM THE MARBLE SLAB....
12-3
....AND GRABS A GLASS VIAL.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S IN THIS TEST TUBE. BUT, IF YOU SO MUCH AS TAKE A DEEP BREATH, I'LL LET YOU HAVE IT!
NO! NO! DON'T THROW IT!
MARY, TAKE THIS CORD AND TIE UP THE DOCTOR. ELIZABETH, GET ME TO A TELEPHONE!
FOOLS FOOLS
??
FOOLS ARE RIGHT! WE'VE BEEN FOOLS TO BELIEVE YOU WERE THE ONLY DOCTOR IN THE WORLD WHO COULD HELP US.
WATCH IT GIRLS! HE'S ABOUT TO PRESS A BUTTON.

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
TIRED OF WAITING, HANK AND PESKY ARE ON THEIR WAY TO THE HOTEL, WHERE BRENDA IS BEING HELD.
GOSH! I'VE NEARLY GONE BATS TRYIN' TO FIGURE WHY BRENDA IS BEING HELD IN THE BEASTLY PENT-HOUSE.
DRUGS
THERE'S THE HOTEL NOW....TWENTY-FOUR STORIES HIGH, THEY SAY THE PENTHOUSE IS THE WHOLE TOP FLOOR.
SURE. WHY NOT? THE BEASTLY FAMILY OWNS THE JOINT.
WHY, ONE ROOM IN THAT PLACE COSTS TWENTY BUCKS A DAY!
THAT'S ALMOST MORE THAN I MAKE IN A WEEK!
SO WHAT? THE BEASTLY FORTUNE STARTED JUST AS HUMBLY.... THAT'S AMERICA....WHAT THE .....!!!?
IT'S THE RITZ PLAZA!
BOOM
?
AT THIS MOMENT, TRAVERTS AND TOM ARE TRYING TO GET BACK TO THE BEASTLY PENTHOUSE...AFTER THEIR SURPRISE EXIT VIA THE LAUNDRY CHUTE.
ELEVATOR OUT OF ORDER
OH! OH! I WAS AFRAID OF THIS.
DON'T LET A LITTLE CLIMBING BOG YOU DOWN
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
Copyright 1944, by The Chicago Tribune
WHAT HAPPENED?
IT'S A BUZZ BOMB, MAYBE!
BOOM
EVERYONE RUNS AROUND IN A PANIC....MYSTIFIED AT THE EXPLOSION.
IT'S THE PENT-HOUSE!
!!
BRENDA'S UP THERE AND MAY BE INJURED.
UNNOTICED IN THE EXCITEMENT, THREE SHEET-DRAPED FIGURES REACH THE REAR EXIT OF THE LAUNDRY.
TAXI!
?
TAXI
2-10
MISS STARR, IT WAS A GOOD THING YOU HAD THE PRESENCE OF MIND TO THROW THAT GLASS VIAL BEFORE WE FELL DOWN THE TRAP DOOR LEADING TO THE LAUNDRY.
NOW, ARE YOU GIRLS CONVINCED THAT DOCTOR PIERRE DID NOT HAVE YOUR INTEREST AT HEART?
IT WAS A TERRIBLE EXPLOSION...DO YOU SUPPOSE HE WAS KILLED?
TAXI

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
SCENE— THE DEMOLISHED BEASTLY PENTHOUSE APARTMENT.
GET THIS! THE RITZ PLAZA JUST BLEW ITS TOP. WE FOUND NO TRACE OF BRENDA AND MARY ELIZABETH IN THE WRECKAGE. YES, DOCTOR PIERRE IS HERE, BADLY WOUNDED. I'LL CALL BACK AS SOON AS ANYTHING DEVELOPES.
SAY, TOM, I'M NOT SO SURE BRENDA WAS IN THE BEASTLY APARTMENT, NOW,
I AM. I EVEN HAVE AN IDEA HOW SHE LEFT FAST ENOUGH TO AVOID BEING CAUGHT IN THE EX-EXPLOSION
YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING, TAYLOR. WE MIGHT FIND THEM IN THE LAUNDRY.
LAUNDRY! ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL ME BRENDA'S BEEN HELD HERE JUST TO HELP WITH THE WASH?
AS TRAVERTS AND TOM REACH THE LAUNDRY, BRENDA AND THE BEASTLY TWINS ARRIVE AT THE RAYO CLINIC.
GIRLS, WAIT HERE WHILE I CALL MY COUSIN TO BRING US SOME CLOTHES.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT, ERNIE. COME HERE!
WHAT IS IT, BERNIE?
LOOK! RIGHT HERE TO OUR HOSPITAL COMES THE FACE WE'VE SPENT OUR LIVES LOOKING FOR.
GIRLS, THE RAYO BROTHERS IN PERSON!
AHHH
AHHH
NEVER IN MY WILDEST DREAMS HAVE I EVER HOPED FOR SUCH A MARVELOUS FACE....(TO WORK ON). WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL MY LIFE, GIRL OF MY NIGHTMARES---ER--- I MEAN---ER---DREAMS?
XXXXXX
AT THIS MOMENT, A NEW PATIENT IS WHEELED IN.
SAD CASE....BOTH HANDS BLOWN OFF.
LOOK! IT'S.... IT'S DOCTOR PIERRE!
BOTH OF HIS HANDS GONE? NOW, HE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PERFORM HIS EXPERIMENT ON US.
SO YOUR LOOKS AND YOUR FATE ARE IN THE HANDS OF THE RAYO BROTHERS!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
O.K. GANG. JUST FIND COUSIN ABREATHA AND WE'LL FIND THE EATS.
COME ON, VINELLA. WE CAN'T LET BRENDA HOG THAT MISTLETOE.
NO VILLIANS INVITED
THERE SHOULD BE A LAW AGAINST BBB. GIRLS AT OUR FLASH CHRISTMAS PARTY.
HERE'S ONE FOR THE BOYS....HANK O'HAIR CHEESECAKE!
MERCY! IT'S THRILLING BEING AT ONE OF THESE WONDERFUL NEWSPAPER PARTIES!
JUST WAIT UNTIL THE HOLIDAYS ARE OVER. THIS GANG IS GOING TO SETTLE DOWN, OR ELSE....
...AND IF YOU THINK THIS IS WHAT A NEWSPAPER PARTY IS LIKE....GUESS AGAIN, BUB!
"MERRY CHRISTMAS" EVERYONE WISH YOU WERE HERE!
HEY! TELL THAT DAME TO TAKE OFF HER MASK. WHO IS SHE?
AH HA! GATE CRASHERS! NOW IF YOU TWO LITTLE CHICKS WILL JUST FOLLOW ME TO....
OH! GO ON IN. I'M SURE LOTS OF PEOPLE HERE HAVE HEARD OF YOU.
I'M GLAD I'VE GOT MORE PARTIES BEFORE DINNER.... HATE GETTING TOO HUNGRY!
GO FLY SOME MISTLE-TOE OVER HERE, CUTE STUFF.
KEEP OUT
DALE
PUP
STARR
LET'S GO HOME, JANIE. ALL PARTIES ARE ALIKE THESE DAYS....NO MEN!
12-24

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
GREETINGS
YIPPEE
Dale Messick
WOW! THAT WAS SOME NEW YEAR PARTY! I'M DEAD!
TIE UP THE FAT ONE. IT'S THE RED-HEADED ONE WE WANT!
EEEK!
O.K. BOSS
THERE! THAT'LL HOLD YOU WHILE WE SHOOT YOUR GIRL FRIEND.
BLUB BLUB
YOU'RE NEXT!
MY BEST DRESS!
RIP
1945
HOW ABOUT SITTIN' IN DEM PILLERS AN' GIVIN' US A BIG SMILE?
HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT....! YOU LUGS BREAK INTO MY APARTMENT, TIE UP MY COUSIN, RUIN MY BEST DRESS, PUSH ME ON THE FLOOR, AND TELL ME TO SMILE!
GARRR
GEE! BRENDA STARR, IS THAT TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR THE G.I. JOE'S WHO WANT PIN-UPS OF YOU FOR THEIR 1945 COLLECTION?
??
A CAMERA!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
SCENE— ROOM 13D, IN THE RAYO CLINIC HOSPITAL.
ELIZABETH, THIS WILL BE THE MOST EXCITING DAY IN OUR LIVES!
JUST THINK! UNDER THESE BANDAGES IS A NEW AND.... AND BEAUTIFUL FACE, I HOPE.
....AND UNDER MINE, A NEW AND LOVELY BODY!
OH! MARY, TO-DAY IS REALLY OUR COMING OUT PARTY.
WHILE IN THE CITY ROOM OF THE FLASH—
HANK, WE'RE INVITED TO AN UNVEILING.
A WHAT?
THE RAYO BROTHERS CALL THE REMOVAL OF THE BANDAGES FROM THE BEASTLY TWINS THE UNVEILING OF THEIR MASTERPIECE.
SOUNDS LIKE TICKETS TO A STRIP-TEASE!
I'LL THINK COME ALONG WITH YOU GIRLS.
REALLY, DAPHNE, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN INVITED. YOU HAVE NEVER EVEN MET THE TWINS.
SO WHAT! I'M COMING ALONG—AND THAT'S THAT!
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, MY FINE FEATHERED FRIEND!
HANK O'HAIR, TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF ME!
JUST WALTZ OVER HERE, DAPHNE. I'VE GOT AN IDEA HOW WE CAN PREVENT HER FROM COMMITTING A SOCIAL ERROR
LATER
OH, BRENDA AND HANK, WE'RE SO GLAD YOU COULD COME.
SAY, WE WOULDN'T MISS THIS.... SORRY TO BE LATE.
HAD SOME BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO.
13D
DO SOMETHING, YOU IDIOT! DON'T JUST STAND THERE!
GEE WHIZ, DAPHNE, HOW CAN I OPEN A LOCKED DOOR WITHOUT THE KEY?
STOP SCREAMING! WE'LL GET YOU LOOSE.
NO!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
UNCLE MUGGS, LOOK AT ME! LOOK WHAT'S BEEN DONE TO ME! BOO HOO!
EVERY WOMAN ON THE FLASH HAS HAD A HAND IN THIS AND I DEMAND YOU FIRE EVERY ONE OF THEM! AS FOR BRENDA AND HANK O'HAIR....WELL, WHEN I FINISH WITH THEM....BOO HOO!
DAPHNE, MY DEAR, THIS IS AN OUTRAGE! WHO DID IT?
THAT'S JUST IT. I DON'T KNOW. THAT'S WHY YOU'VE GOT TO FIRE EVERY GOPY GIRL ON THE PAPER.
BUT, DAPHNE, THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. THERE'S A WAR ON. I COULD NEVER REPLACE THEM.
BANG
BUT I QUITE AGREE WITH YOU. FIND OUT WHO CUT OFF YOUR HAIR AND I'LL DISCHARGE HER.
THAT WON'T BRING BACK MY HAIR. IT'LL TAKE MONTHS TO GROW!
NOW, LET'S WITNESS A HAPPIER SCENE
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE WILL NOW UNVEIL MARY AND ELIZABETH BEASTLY!
ZIP
ZIP
CLAP CLAP
IT'S AMAZING!
IDENTICAL TWINS!
CLAP
I USED ELIZABETH'S FACE AS A PATTERN....
...AND GAVE MARY'S BODY TO ELIZABETH!
BUT, MARY, YOUR HAIR! HOW ON EARTH WERE THE DOCTORS ABLE TO GIVE YOU HAIR LIKE ELIZABETH'S?
SHH! IT'S A WIG, AND THE LAST IN CAPTIVITY, TOO!
I'M GOING TO TAKE PIANO LESSONS, NOW THAT I HAVE LOVELY HANDS.
...AND, NOW, IN APPRECIATION OF THE SPECTACULAR ACHIEVEMENT OF THE RAYO BROTHERS, WE ARE GIVING ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO THEIR HOSPITAL TO HELP THEM IN THEIR GREAT WORK.
GOLLY, AFTER WHAT I WITNESSED THIS AFTERNOON, I FEEL ASHAMED OF THE WAY WE TREATED DAPHNE, CLOSING THAT DOOR ON HER HAIR, LOCKING IT, AND TAKING THE KEY WITH US.
SHE'S PROBABLY STILL THERE!

An Appreciation

A Closer look at the Curious Tale of Mary Elizabeth Beastly

The fictional persona of Brenda Starr has enough diversity for two women and in the 1944 storyline you've just read, this observation almost became fact.

While *Brenda Starr* has frequently been referred to as a soap opera, Dale Messick often switched genres when creating her adventures. "The Curious Tale of Mary Elizabeth Beastly" is a tale of comic noir, a story with dark panels, dark characters, and dark motives. None of this is realized by Brenda as she visits the Beastly home in order to hear the reading of the will and to interview the heiress.

In a nice twist Messick chose not to house the mysterious socialite in a remote gothic mansion surrounded by cypress trees or a crumbling Transylvania Castle, but in a rambling penthouse atop a hotel in the heart of Brenda's city. The reporter finds the residence is everything one expects of someone living the lifestyle of the rich and famous — vast city view, sumptuous furnishings, as well as things one wouldn't expect: an operating room with bubbling beakers and a marble operating slab. Hmmm! The last feature, not to be found even in the most well appointed of rental properties, should give Brenda pause for concern.

As you've just seen, the story unfolds quickly, only relying on Sunday Strips of eleven panels to further the continuity (the daily strips for *Brenda Starr* would not come into place for another two years — just go to the next chapter!). Of the three main characters in the story, heiress Mary Elizabeth, eminent surgeon/scientist Doctor Amos Pierre and the surprisingly grotesque, nameless nurse, none are whom they first appear to be and much to Brenda's consternation, after interviewing each, more questions than answers arise. Dr. Pierre has an obvious interest in Brenda. He admires the good head on her shoulders and likes her body, but not in the way Miss Starr thinks. Apparently the good doctor received his doctorate from the prestigious Victor Frankenstein College of Medical Knowledge, in that he wants to transplant Brenda's face on to a patient he feels needs it more than she. This combined with the strange utterances of Mary Elizabeth prompt Brenda to observe, "Ye Gods! It sounds as though I'm going to be served as breaded cutlets tonight."

But then at times even Brenda Starr does not appear to be herself. During a chance encounter with Hank, she appears eerily mannequinesque with blank Little Orphan Annie eyes, her face an emotionless mask.

This dark tone is not just in thematic content or the characters' motives, but the art itself is dark. While drawn for the Sunday comics section and as such intended to be viewed in color this tale can be enjoyed in black and white like an old film from Hollywood's classic years. All comic strip art was first sketched in pencil then finished in India ink. Dale Messick worked with a number two sable-hair brush outlining characters, clothes and accessories before completing the art with shading and solid black areas. Dark images fill the story.

The total blackness of Mary Elizabeth's hair against her ivory skin in the bedroom scene gives her the look of a vampire. Confined to her bed, will she

rise up out of it as night falls? The scene depicting Brenda strapped to the marble operating table, hair flaring above her head evokes visions of director James Whale's iconic film *Bride of Frankenstein* (1935). One can imagine how Whale would have filmed the Beastly story, replete with erupting test tubes, towering art deco sets and musical score by Franz Waxman.

There was an element of criticism toward the Mary Elizabeth Beastly story. It was preposterous, wildly improbable, but ideas stemming from cartoonists' improbable imaginations often become reality. Chester Gould's 1947 two-way wrist radio, once considered science fiction became commonplace in the form of the cell phone. The surgical dreams of Dale Messick's doctor Amos Pierre are coming to pass in the front page news of face transplants.

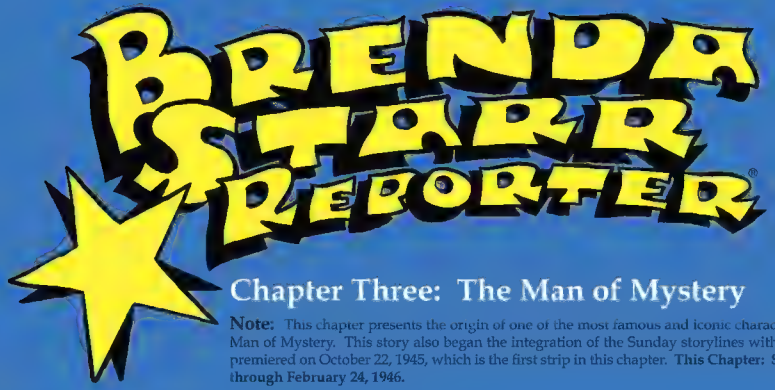
Also, critics can look to French film director and co-founder of Cinematheque Francaise Georges FranJu's 1959 film *Les Yeux Sans Visage* (Eyes Without a Face). A cult classic in black and white in which a surgeon/scientist tries to give his disfigured daughter a new face, using the faces of others. If Messick's Beastly story was any source of inspiration to FranJu it is undocumented, but similarities abound. The daughter in the film wears a clear expressionless mask revealing only her eyes. At one point the Beastly girl dons a clear expressionless mask which does not reveal her eyes. Both images create an eerie unease in their viewers. Both doctor/scientists use unwilling victims in their surgeries, but where FranJu's surgeon had the foresight to kidnap women who were alone, without family or attachments, Messick's doctor Pierre decided to use the most visible of victims, a nationally famous, big city reporter, who just happened to have flaming red hair.

At the tale's conclusion, Brenda returns to the normal demands of her journalistic world. But brushes with the world of fantasy are never far distant. In future assignments she would meet an elusive mermaid, a wolfman bent on marriage and a black-eye-patched mystery man.

Also, it is worth noting in this story that there is a single panel which sums up the seven decade career of Brenda Starr reporter. As the news woman is strapped to the marble operating table, not knowing her fate or future, but recognizing a good story when she sees it, yells out, "…you can have this body, take this face. But please, please, don't take the most colossal front page scoop a girl reporter ever had!!!"

Romance was a part of *Brenda Starr*, but the story always came first.

—Richard Pietrzyk



Chapter Three: The Man of Mystery

Note: This chapter presents the origin of one of the most famous and iconic characters in the *Brenda Starr* strip, Basil St. John, the Man of Mystery. This story also began the integration of the Sunday storylines with the daily stories. The daily *Brenda Starr* strip premiered on October 22, 1945, which is the first strip in this chapter. **This Chapter: Sunday and daily strips from October 22, 1945 through February 24, 1946.**

?
MANAGING EDITOR

WHAT ON EARTH IS THIS?
A...A BOLT OF RIBBON, SIR.

WHY IS A BOLT OF RIBBON BOUNCING AROUND THE CITY ROOM OF THE FLASH.
WHY...ER... THAT IS... MISS STARR....

...YOU DON'T EXPECT ME TO COVER THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW WITHOUT, AT LEAST, A NEW BOW ON MY HAT DO YOU, MR. LIVWRIGHT?

YOU CAN COUNT ME OUT, BRENDA. FASHION SHOWS LEAVE ME COLD.
BUT, HANK, THIS ISN'T AN ORDINARY AFFAIR....
FLASH

THIS IS INTERNATIONAL. JUST THINK! GOWNS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.
I'M A REPORTER, NOT A CLOTHES HORSE.

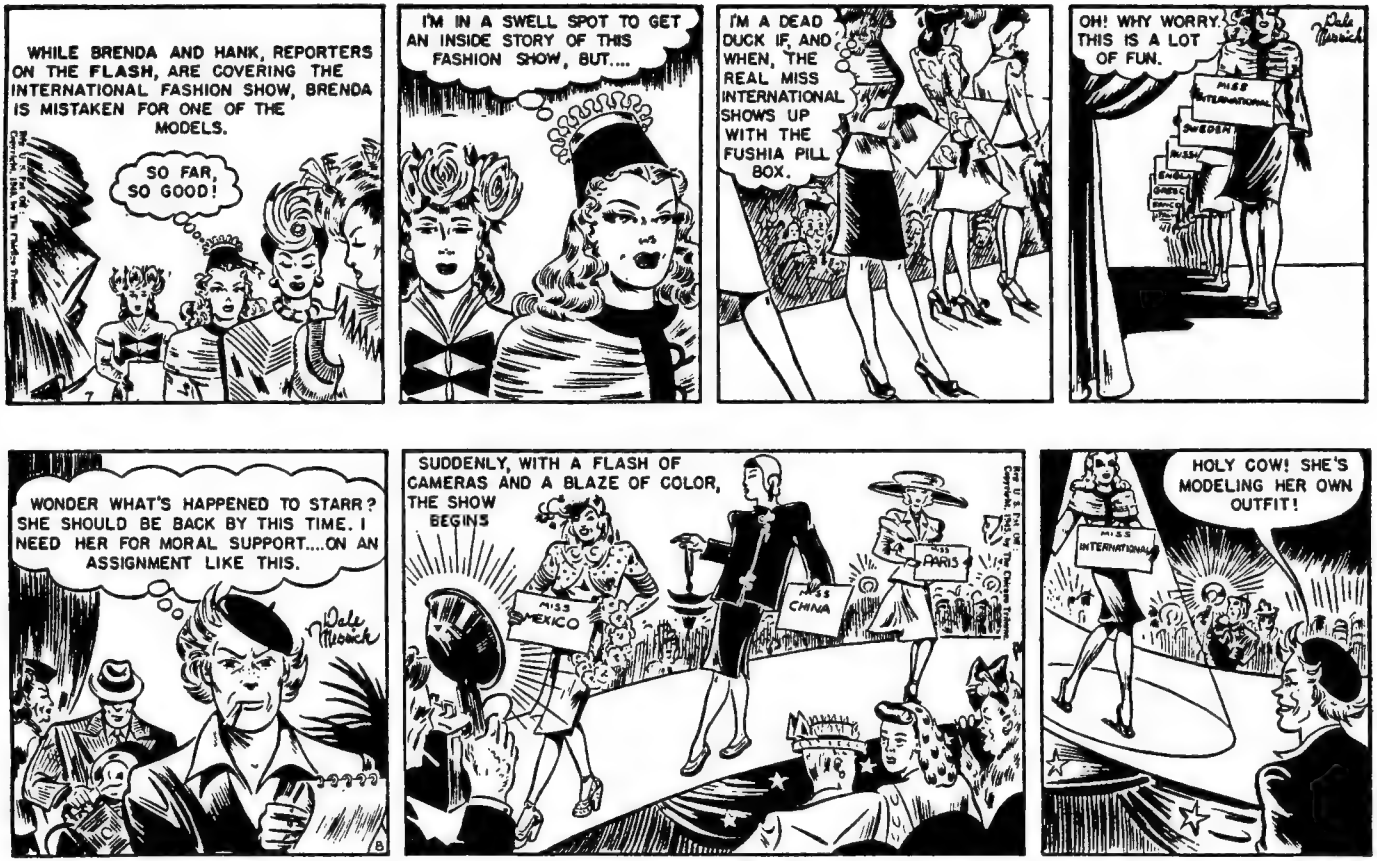
HA! THAT WILL BE THE DAY WHEN HANK O'HAIR IS A CLOTHES HORSE.

BEAUTIES FROM EVERY NATION MODEL. THE WORLD'S GREATEST DESIGNERS WILL BE THERE. AW, COME ON, HANK, IT'LL BE HISTORY IN THE MAKING.
O.K., YOU WIN.
BRENDA, YA CAN LEAD A HORSE TO WATER, BUT YA CAN'T MAKE 'EM DRINK.

HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA? MY BEANIE!
OH! IS THAT WHAT IT IS? HA! I THOUGHT IT WAS A BLEMISH.
NO, THAT'S SOMETHING A MINER CRAWLED OUT OF.
SUITS ME. AND IF YOURE SUGGESTING I GET A NEW HAT FOR THIS FOOL FASHION SHOW....
OH! HANK, DON'T BE DIFFICULT. I KNOW JUST THE SHOP TO GET YOU A REALLY UP-TO-DATE CHAPEAU.
STOP ACTING AS IF I WERE DRAGGING YOU OFF TO THE DENTIST, OR SOMETHING.
LATER
MADAM SILLY HASHE
SKOPPE
THIS IS IT!
MADAM, WE'RE COVERING THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW, AND WE WANT SOMETHING SMART FOR HANK.
A ZENZATION! LOOK, CHEREE, REAL LIVE..... FLOWERS!
IT'S LOVELY, BUT THE FLOWERS WILL DIE IN A FEW HOURS.
NO! NO! YOU DO NOT KNOW ZE SECRET. LOOK INSIDE.
WHY! IT'S SOIL!
DIRT!
ZE FLOWER POT HAT WILL MAKE HISTORY!
WOULDN'T IT BE SIMPLER JUST TO LET YOUR HEAD GET GOOD AND DIRTY AND PLANT YOUR OWN PETUNIA SEEDS.?

WHAT'S THIS CALLED, "CLEAN UP THE KITCHEN"?
HANK, PLEASE STOP INSULTING MADAM HASHES HATS.
MAYBE MADAME WOULD LIKE SOMESING MORE CONSERVATIVE (FROM MY SCRAP BASKET.) I THINK I HAVE JUST ZE HAT ZAT SUITS YOU.
A BEANIE!
OH! DEAR, THAT'S JUST LIKE YOUR OLD ONE!
WHICH PROVES—A THING OF BEAUTY IS A JOY FOREVER.
Dale Messick
SEE, HANK, EVERYONE'S HERE!
HELLO, STARR. JUST UP YOUR ALLEY....THIS FASHION STUFF.
NOW, I'VE SEEN EVERYTHING! HANK O'HAIR AT A FASHION SHOW!
AND WHAT'S MORE, SHE'S EVEN GOT A NEW BEANIE FOR THE OCCASION.
NO!
AS THE REPORTERS RESTLESSLY WAIT FOR THE SHOW TO START, AN EXCITED LITTLE MAN RUSHES UP TO BRENDA.
PLEASE, MISS STANKIE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN HERE? SUITS AND COATS ARE READY TO START. YOU WILL HAVE TIME FOR THE PRESS LATER.
BUT.... I'M NOT MISS...MISS..??
Dale Messick

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
BUT I'M NOT MISS STANKIE!
BRENDA AND HANK ARE COVERING THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW. BRENDA HAS JUST BEEN MISTAKEN FOR A MODEL.
REALLY!! THIS IS NO TIME TO JOKE. THE SHOW IS STARTING. COME, BEFORE I GO OUT OF MY MIND COMPLETELY!
GWAN, STARR, MAYBE THERE'S AN INSIDE STORY
O.K.
WELL, CAN YOU TYPE THAT! THAT STARR WOMAN'S UP TO SOMETHING.
WITH HER LOOKS HOW CAN SHE LOSE?
TAKE OFF THAT MONSTROSITY! YOU KNOW THE FUCHSIA PILL BOX GOES WITH THAT SUIT. WHY DO YOU..YOU STUPID MODELS TAKE LIBERTIES WITH MY CREATIONS? I'M SO UPSET, I COULD SCREAM!
OH!OH! I'LL HAVE TO THINK FAST!
WHAT!
THE FUCHSIA PILL BOX FELL ON THE FLOOR AND WAS CRUSHED.
...BUT, REMEMBER, THIS LITTLE NUMBER WAS YOUR SECOND CHOICE.
OH! IT WAS? WELL, I DON'T LIKE IT NOW. IT'S HORRIBLE!
I CAN'T WEAR YOUR FUCHSIA PILL BOX, SO WHAT -SHALL I DO?
GO AHEAD AND WEAR IT. WHAT DOES IT MATTER NOW? I'M RUINED...
REMIND ME ... YOU'RE FIRED... AFTER TO-DAY
HA! MAYBE YOU'D BETTER HIRE ME, FIRST.
BRENDA IS GIVEN A CARD, AS SHE STEPS IN LINE WITH THE MOST BEAUTIFUL MODELS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD.
MISS INTERNATIONAL
MISS CHINA
MISS SWEDEN


WHILE BRENDA AND HANK, REPORTERS ON THE FLASH, ARE COVERING THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW, BRENDA IS MISTAKEN FOR ONE OF THE MODELS.
SO FAR, SO GOOD!
I'M IN A SWELL SPOT TO GET AN INSIDE STORY OF THIS FASHION SHOW, BUT....
I'M A DEAD DUCK IF, AND WHEN, THE REAL MISS INTERNATIONAL SHOWS UP WITH THE FUSHIA PILL BOX.
OH! WHY WORRY. THIS IS A LOT OF FUN.
Dale Messick
MISS INTERNATIONAL
SWEDEN
WONDER WHAT'S HAPPENED TO STARR? SHE SHOULD BE BACK BY THIS TIME. I NEED HER FOR MORAL SUPPORT....ON AN ASSIGNMENT LIKE THIS.
Dale Messick
SUDDENLY, WITH A FLASH OF CAMERAS AND A BLAZE OF COLOR, THE SHOW BEGINS
MISS MEXICO
MISS CHINA
MISS PARIS
HOLY COW! SHE'S MODELING HER OWN OUTFIT!
MISS INTERNATIONAL

MISS STANKIE, YOUR HEAD IS IN A FOG. IF IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE, GET INTO YOUR NEXT COSTUME, PLEASE!
I'LL JUST HAVE TO GUESS. I'LL TAKE A FLYER ON THIS HOUSE COAT.
Dale Messick
NO, NOT HOUSE COATS! THIS DINNER GOWN IS NEXT. YOU ARE PUTTING ME IN AN EARLY GRAVE!
BY THIS TIME SOME OF THE OTHER MODELS BEGIN TO NOTICE BRENDA.
I'M REALLY SURPRISED! SHE SEEMS SO INEXPERIENCED!
HA! ACTS LIKE HER FIRST JOB.
HMM....I'VE GOT A HUNCH I'M NOT FOOLING EVERYONE AROUND HERE.
NOW, I KNOW WHY DRESS REHEARSALS ARE NECESSARY. I'M SO JITTERY, I HARDLY KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
WELL, HERE GOES! OH! OH! IT'S THAT MAD DESIGNER AGAIN!
EEEEEK
GET SOME WATER! CEDRIC JUST PASSED OUT.
PLOP
THINKING HE HAS DISCOVERED SHE IS NOT MISS STANKIE, BRENDA HURRIES ALONG WITH THE OTHER MODELS
Dale Messick

NEXT TO MOONLIGHT AND ROSES FOR ROMANCE....IT'S CANDLE LIGHT AND DINNER. WHO CAN RESIST THIS DINNER GOWN CREATED BY NONE OTHER THAN OUR CEDRIC MODISTE? HE'S THE....BLAH.... BLAH....BLAH....
AS BRENDA STEPS ACROSS THE STAGE, THERE IS A HUSHED SILENCE
....AND THEN, WILD APPLAUSE.
A NEW TREND
CLAP
CLAP
SPECTACULAR
DIVINE
BACK STAGE, POOR CEDRIC OPENS HIS EYES....
NEVER MIND THE SMELLING SALTS
CONGRATULATIONS, CEDRIC. YOUR DINNER GOWN IS A SENSATION.... CLEVER BOY!
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I MUST BE HAVING A NIGHTMARE. MY DINNER GOWN CAN'T BE A SENSATION!
SHE'S GOT IT ON UP-SIDE-DOWN!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
BRENDA HAS JUST WOWED THE FASHION SHOW BY WEARING CEDRIC MODISTE'S GOWN — UP-SIDE-DOWN.
FIRST, YOU RUIN MY FUCHSIA PILL BOX.... THEN, YOU DO THIS TO MY GOWN! WHAT WAS THE SCARF, IS NOW A TRAIN....
...IT'S TOO MUCH. I CAN'T BEAR ANY MORE....I THINK I'M GOING TO FAINT
PLEASE, MISTER MODISTE!
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, BUT I TRIED TO TELL YOU I WAS NOT MISS STANKIE, YOUR MODEL, WHEN YOU DRAGGED ME OUT OF THE PRESS ROOM
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.; Copyright, 1940, by The Chicago Tribune
WHAT? SAY THAT AGAIN! YOU'RE NOT MISS STANKIE?
NO, I'M A REPORTER. I CAME HERE TO COVER THE SHOW FOR MY PAPER.
YOU WOULDN'T LISTEN, SO I PRETENDED TO BE YOUR MISS STANKIE, JUST AS A GAG. WE REPORTERS NEVER MISS A CHANCE FOR A STORY, AND....
I THINK I'VE GOT JUST THAT. DOESN'T IT SEEM RATHER MYSTERIOUS THAT MISS STANKIE HASN'T SHOWN UP?
WHY....YES.
WEARING MY GOWNS IS THE AMBITION OF ANY MODEL.
SO, SHE MUST HAVE A PRETTY GOOD REASON FOR NOT BEING HERE.
BUT WHY DIDN'T SHE NOTIFY ME?
WOULD IT BE TO ANY ONE'S ADVANTAGE IF YOUR GOWNS DIDN'T APPEAR IN THIS SHOW?
DRESSING ROOM NO. 599
WHY....I....GOOD HEAVENS! ARE YOU SUGGESTING THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHING UNDERHANDED AFOOT?
...ISN'T IT A FACT THAT THIS SHOW WILL ESTABLISH THE NEW NUMBER ONE DESIGNER IN THE WORLD OF FASHIONS?
I THINK WE'D BETTER TRY TO LOCATE MISS STANKIE AT ONCE!
YES....YES....I'LL CALL HER HOTEL
RING RING

I'M RUINED. YOU'VE WORN MY GOWN UP-SIDE-DOWN!
I'M SORRY, BUT I TRIED TO TELL YOU I WAS NOT MISS STANKIE, YOUR MODEL.
Wale Mossick
DRESSING ROOM NO 13
...THEN, WHO ARE YOU?
I'M A REPORTER FROM THE FLASH. REMEMBER, IT WAS YOU WHO DRAGGED ME OUT OF THE PRESS ROOM, AND INSISTED I WEAR YOUR CLOTHES IN THIS SHOW.
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY MISS STANKIE IS NOT HERE. WEARING MY GOWNS IS THE AMBITION OF ANY MODEL. I'M GOING TO CALL HER APARTMENT
BET I GET A GOOD STORY OUT OF THIS, YET!
RING RING RING
NO ANSWER. SHE'S NOT IN HER APARTMENT.
Wale Mossick
WHAT'LL I DO? IT'S TOO LATE TO REPLACE HER. THE SHOW HAS STARTED.
YOU STILL HAVE ME, MR. MODISTE I'LL "PINCH HIT" FOR YOU.
OH! WHY DO THINGS LIKE THIS HAVE TO HAPPEN TO ME? WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE BUT TO LET YOU....EVEN WHEN YOU DO WEAR MY GOWNS UP-SIDE-DOWN!!
LATER
HERE, SWIM SUITS--NEXT!
TOP
BOTTOM

I'LL MODEL YOUR CLOTHES FOR YOU, MR. MODISTE, IF YOU PROMISE TO LET ME HAVE FIRST CHANCE TO FIND OUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOUR MODEL, MISS STANKIE
15
AFTER ALL, I'M A REPORTER AND ALL THIS SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD STORY TO ME.
Dale Messick
Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1946, by The Chicago Tribune
I'VE BEEN WONDERING....WOULD IT BE TO ANYONE'S ADVANTAGE IF YOUR GOWNS DID NOT APPEAR IN THIS INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW?
MISS STARR! ARE YOU SUGGESTING....
BUT, OF COURSE, ...THAT'S IT!..
ANY ONE WITH MY GREAT SUCCESS AND ABILITY WOULD HAVE ENEMIES. ISN'T IT JUST DREADFUL?
16
MISS STARR, THE POLICE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS!
NOT SO FAST. YOU PROMISED TO LET ME HAVE FIRST CHANCE AT SOLVING THE STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE OF YOUR MODEL, MISS STANKIE. REMEMBER?
Reg. U.S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1946, by The Chicago Tribune
WHILE OUT FRONT—
SAY, HANK, WHAT'S THE GAG? STARR WEARING CEDRIC MODISTE CLOTHES IN THIS SHOW.
YOU KNOW AS MUCH AS I DO....HA! MAYBE THAT'S WHY STARR'S GOOD... ALWAYS GOT A NEW TRICK UP HER SLEEVE.
SHE'S STRICTLY FRONT PAGE
Dale Messick
INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW

INSTEAD OF HAVING LUNCH DURING INTERMISSION, BRENDA, UNNOTICED, SLIPS THRU A BACK ENTRANCE OF THE HOTEL.
I'M GOING TO HAVE A LOOK AROUND MISS STANKIE'S APARTMENT. IF ANYTHING HAS HAPPENED TO HER, I'D LIKE TO BE THE FIRST TO KNOW.
I'LL PUT ON THIS HEAVY VEIL, AND MAYBE I CAN PULL A FAST ONE.... AS LONG AS I'M SUPPOSED TO LOOK SO MUCH LIKE THIS MODEL
I'VE LOCKED MYSELF OUT. WOULD YOU PLEASE SEND UP THE HOUSE KEY?
GEE! THAT STANKIE DAME SHOULD HAVE HER KEYS TATTOOED ON!
S' FUNNY, GLAMOUR PUSS, YA LOOK LIKE SOMEBODY ELSE TO-DAY.... OR IS IT JUST A NEW MIRACLE FOUNDATION CREAM?
OH!OH!.... TO GET RID OF HER.... BUT QUICK!
I'M NOT FOOLING THAT BABY!
IF SHE'S MISS STANKIE, I'M HETTA LA MAR.
BRENDA ENTERS THE MODEL'S APARTMENT. ....AND CLOSES THE DOOR.
NOTHING IN HERE. MAYBE THAT DOOR OVER THERE LEADS TO THE BEDROOM.

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
GOOD GOSH! NO WONDER SHE DIDN'T SHOW UP AT THE FASHION SHOW!
UNNOTICED, BRENDA HAS SLIPPED AWAY FROM THE FASHION SHOW, AND HAS BLUFFED HER WAY INTO MISS STANKIE'S APARTMENT, WHERE SHE HAS JUST FOUND THE MISSING MODEL.
IT....IT LOOKS LIKE SUICIDE TO ME. I'D BETTER GET MY OLD FRIEND, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS, OVER HERE AT ONCE.
I WOULD HAVE SOME TALL EXPLAINING TO DO IF I WERE FOUND HERE.
GEE! I'D LIKE TO SEE HER FACE.... WONDER IF WE REALLY DO LOOK ALIKE!
SUDDENLY—
OH! OH! SOMEONE'S COMING!
BRENDA RUNS TO THE DOOR OF THE BEDROOM, AND PEEKS OUT INTO THE LIVING ROOM.
Reg U. S. Pat Off
Copyright, 1945, by The Chicago Tribune
I'VE SEEN HER SOME PLACE, BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER WHERE.... SHE'S VERY FAMILIAR.... OH, HECK! I JUST CAN'T PLACE HER....WONDER WHAT SHE'S DOING HERE!
I'M GOING TO SEE IF I CAN FOOL HER INTO THINKING I'M MISS STANKIE. FIRST, I'LL PULL MY HAIR DOWN OVER MY FACE, AND THEN PUT ON ONE OF HER NEGLIGEES.
HELLO!
NO! NO!
SHE'S FAINTED!
PLOP

WOW! THINGS ARE HAPPENING... CEDRIC MODISTE PROMISED THAT IF I'D PINCH HIT FOR HIM, HE'D LET ME TRY TO FIND HIS MISSING MODEL. SO, DURING AN INTERMISSION OF THE FASHION SHOW, I CAME HERE TO MISS STANKIE'S APARTMENT.....
Dale Messick
11-12
I FOUND HER....WITH A BULLET IN HER HEAD. I WAS GOING TO PHONE MY FRIEND, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS, WHEN I HEARD SOMEONE ENTER THE APARTMENT....
I DIDN'T WANT TO BE FOUND HERE, SO I PRETENDED I WAS MISS STANKIE. I GRABBED HER NEGLIGEE, PULLED MY HAIR OVER MY FACE, AND OPENED THE DOOR TO THE INTRUDER.
SHE TOOK ONE LOOK AT ME, AND PASSED OUT. WONDER WHO SHE IS, AND WHAT SHE IS DOING HERE?
HELLO, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS? BRENDA STARR. CAN YOU COME TO THIS ADDRESS AT ONCE? GOOD!
11-13
IT'S THE STONEFIELD APARTMENT HOTEL, CORNER OF 49TH STREET. ASK FOR MISS STANKIE. I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING WHEN YOU GET HERE....HURRY!
HMM....THAT GIRL HAS ANOTHER BAFFLING MYSTERY, NO DOUBT....
Dale Messick
BRENDA IS REALLY STIMULATING I LOVE HER ENTHUSIASM, HER BRILLIANCE, HER....A.... OH! I'M AN OLD FOOL!

...WHILE I'M WAITING FOR DETECTIVE TRAVERTS TO GET HERE, I'LL TRY TO REVIVE THIS WOMAN.... WISH I COULD RECALL WHERE I'VE SEEN HER BEFORE !

SHE'S REALLY OUT. I'D BETTER GET SOME WATER !

...SAY, I'M DOING ALL RIGHT ! I'VE FOUND MISS STANKIE, AND NOW, THIS WOMAN, WHO MUST BE SOMEHOW CONNECTED WITH THE MODEL'S DEATH.

....BUT, AS BRENDA RETURNS WITH THE GLASS OF WATER—
WHAM

SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO MISS STANKIE!
MISS STANKIE? HMM... IT'S BRENDA. IS SHE LIVING HERE UNDER AN ALIAS?

OHH.... MY HEAD!
DRINK THIS...AND TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED.

YOU MAY LEAVE.... DETECTIVE TRAVERTS AND I WISH TO DISCUSS THIS, ALONE.
O.K., I'M GOING.

615
Dale Messick

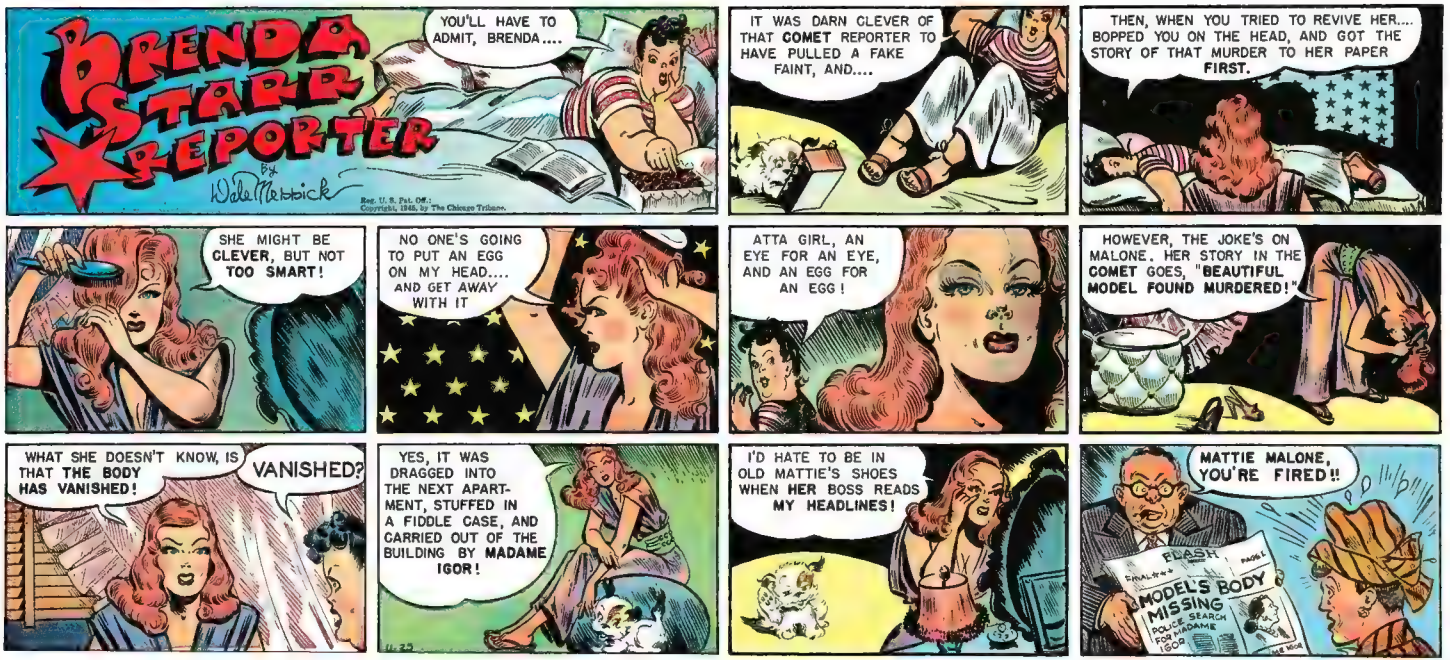
O.K. LET'S HAVE IT. WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO, NOW ?
SSSH....JUST A MINUTE.
11-16
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1946, by The Chicago Tribune.
Dale Messick
...NOW, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS, I HARDLY KNOW WHERE TO START. SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED IN THE PAST FEW HOURS.
WHY NOT START AT THE BEGINNING?
LATER—
I DRAGGED THE WOMAN TO THE COUCH TO REVIVE HER. AS I CAME BACK TO THE ROOM, WITH A GLASS OF WATER....WHAMO! YOU KNOW THE REST... SHE VANISHED!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO THIS WOMAN IS ?
AT FIRST I THOUGHT SHE WAS ONE OF THE DRESS DESIGNERS FROM THE FASHION SHOW BUT I'M REALLY NOT SURE..... SHE DOES SEEM VAGUELY FAMILIAR. I'VE SEEN HER SOMEWHERE....
...WELL, NO DOUBT SHE IS MIXED UP IN THE DEATH OF MISS STANKIE.
11-17
Dale Messick
THAT'S WHAT I THINK, TOO, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS. BOY, THIS IS GOING TO MAKE SOME STORY! AND TO THINK IT ALL STARTED FROM AN INNOCENT FASHION SHOW!
LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT THE MODEL.
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1946, by The Chicago Tribune.
SHE'S IN THE BEDROOM. I DIDN'T TOUCH A THING.
YOU MEAN MISS STANKIE WAS IN THE BEDROOM!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1945, by The Chicago Tribune
TORNADO, WE MIGHT AS WELL EAT....NO TELLING WHEN BRENDA WILL GET HOME.
SHE SPENDS ALL DAY AT THAT FASHION SHOW AND ALL NIGHT TRYIN' TO FIND THAT MISSING MODEL.... WHILE I GET TWO DESSERTS.
I'D SURE HATE A JOB THAT KEPT ME TOO BUSY TO EAT....
HA! YOU'RE TOO BUSY EATIN' TO EVEN GET A JOB!
I'M JUST GOING TO LET THE DISHES GO. I'VE GOT TO FINISH "STARVED FOR LOVE" TO-NIGHT.
HMMP.... FAT AND LAZY!
Fancy
Fancy Mae
...BUT I LOVE HER!
.... AND I'D BE A PRETTY LONELY LITTLE DOG, IF I BELONGED TO BRENDA ALONE....
GLAMOROUS CAREER GIRLS NEVER HAVE TIME TO BE COMFY, LIKE THIS, WITH A GOOD BOOK, AND A BOX OF CANDY.
LATER
ABRETHA BREEZ, STUFFING CHOCOLATES AGAIN!
WHAT A DAY!
SEE WHAT I MEAN?

BRENDA AND DETECTIVE TRAVERTS, ON THE TRAIL OF THE MISSING MODEL, CLIMB OUT ON STANKIE'S FIRE ESCAPE.
LOOK WHAT'S CAUGHT HERE IN THIS WINDOW OF THE NEXT APARTMENT!
WHY, IT'S A PIECE OF STANKIE'S NEGLIGEE!
GO DOWN TO THE DESK AND FIND OUT WHO LIVES IN THIS ADJOINING APARTMENT.
LATER
615? LET'S SEE. OH, YES, MADAME IGOR LIVES THERE. SHE JUST WENT OUT WITH HER BIG BASS VIOL NOT 20 MINUTES AGO.
SAY, I'VE HEARD OF HER! SHE'S THE GREAT VIOLONCELLIST OF THE METROPOLITAN ORCHESTRA.... GOSH!
Dale Messick
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1934, by The Chicago Tribune
DETECTIVE TRAVERTS, IT'S BRENDA.
11-20
THE DESK CLERK SAYS THAT MADAME IGOR LIVES IN THIS APARTMENT NEXT TO STANKIE....AND SHE HAS GONE WITH HER BIG BASS VIOL.
Dale Messick
HER BASS VIOL CASE. PERHAPS.... LOOK!
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1934, by The Chicago Tribune
THAT'S FUNNY. GOOD GOSH! YOU DON'T SUPPOSE....
YES, IT IS POSSIBLE THE BODY OF MISS STANKIE HAS BEEN TAKEN OUT OF HERE IN THE... CASE OF THE BIG VIOLIN.

I HAVE TO GET BACK TO THE FASHION SHOW. I PROMISED CEDRIC MODISTE I'D MODEL HIS GOWNS UNTIL MISS STANKIE SHOWED UP. NOW WE KNOW SHE ISN'T COMING BACK.
....WHILE I INVESTIGATE MADAME IGOR, HER BASS VIOL, AND THE MISSING MODEL....
Dale Messick
I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU RECALL WHO THE WOMAN IS, WHO HIT YOU OVER THE HEAD.
YES, I'VE RACKED MY BRAIN TRYING TO REMEMBER WHERE I'VE SEEN HER BEFORE.
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1944, by The Chicago Tribune
...AS BRENDA HURRIES BACK TO THE FASHION SHOW, SHE SUDDENLY REMEMBERS——
OH!
MATTIE MALONE.... NOW I REMEMBER WHO THAT WOMAN WAS IN STANKIE'S APARTMENT! SHE'S A REPORTER ON THE COMET.....
I'VE GOT A SNEAKING SUSPICION IT WASN'T THE KILLER I HIT ON THE HEAD IN STANKIE'S APARTMENT, BUT....
COMET
..BRENDA STARR OF THE FLASH. I'M GOING TO HAVE SOME FUN CONVINCING THAT REDHEAD....
Dale Messick
...IT WAS ALL A MISTAKE!
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1944, by The Chicago Tribune

IT'S 3 O'CLOCK, AND TIME FOR THE FASHION SHOW TO CONTINUE.
THE LITTLE DESIGNER, TALKING TO HIMSELF DASHES ABOUT, TEARING HIS HAIR.
WHAT HAPPENS TO ME SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A DOG! FIRST, MY MODEL DOESN'T SHOW UP, AND NOW.... HER SUBSTITUTE ISN'T HERE!
SOMEONE IS TRYING TO PREVENT MY GOWNS FROM APPEARING IN THIS SHOW. I CAN KEEP STILL NO LONGER. I'M GETTING THE POLICE!
CEDRIC MODISTE'S STATEMENT FELL LIKE A LIGHTED MATCH ON A BUNCH OF FIRECRACKERS.
WHO DO YOU SUSPECT?
MR. MODISTE, I'M FROM THE COMET.
HOLD IT, MR. MODISTE.
MISS STANKIE'S MISSING?
ANY FURTHER STATEMENT MR. MODISTE?
HMMP.... I'M NOT GETTING EXCITED. STARR PROBABLY HAS THE STORY TO OUR PAPER BY NOW. I SAW HER PULL OUT OF HERE.... WITH THAT LOOK IN HER EYE.
NICE GOING, STARR... WE'LL GIVE THIS BABY OF YOURS FRONT PAGE IN THE NEXT EDITION.
Dale Messick
NICE GOING, MY EYE! MALONE, OF THE COMET, ALREADY HAS THE STORY ON THE PRESSES!


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.: Copyright, 1945, by The Chicago Tribune.
YOU'LL HAVE TO ADMIT, BRENDA....
IT WAS DARN CLEVER OF THAT COMET REPORTER TO HAVE PULLED A FAKE FAINT, AND....
THEN, WHEN YOU TRIED TO REVIVE HER.... BOPPED YOU ON THE HEAD, AND GOT THE STORY OF THAT MURDER TO HER PAPER FIRST.
SHE MIGHT BE CLEVER, BUT NOT TOO SMART!
NO ONE'S GOING TO PUT AN EGG ON MY HEAD.... AND GET AWAY WITH IT
ATTA GIRL, AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND AN EGG FOR AN EGG!
HOWEVER, THE JOKE'S ON MALONE. HER STORY IN THE COMET GOES, "BEAUTIFUL MODEL FOUND MURDERED!"
WHAT SHE DOESN'T KNOW, IS THAT THE BODY HAS VANISHED!
VANISHED?
YES, IT WAS DRAGGED INTO THE NEXT APARTMENT, STUFFED IN A FIDDLE CASE, AND CARRIED OUT OF THE BUILDING BY MADAME IGOR!
I'D HATE TO BE IN OLD MATTIE'S SHOES WHEN HER BOSS READS MY HEADLINES!
MATTIE MALONE, YOU'RE FIRED!!
FLASH
MODEL'S BODY MISSING
POLICE SEARCH FOR MADAME IGOR

ALL THIS CHEAP PUBLICITY, JUST BECAUSE MY MODEL WAS MURDERED, IS JUST TOO DISTURBING. ....A....ER.... HOW'S THIS POSE?
O.K.! MR. MODISTE. HOLD IT!
WHILE IN THE CITY ROOM OF THE FLASH—
GEE, TOM, ISN'T IT EXCITING ABOUT BRENDA TAKING THE PLACE OF THAT MISS STANKIE AT THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOW?
PUP
PERSONALLY, I THINK SHE'S NUTS!
Dale Messick
WHY, TOM?
WHOEVER STOPPED STANKIE FROM WEARING CEDRIC MODISTE'S CLOTHES MAY ALSO TRY TO STOP BRENDA.
Reg U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1944, by The Chicago Tribune
IF I WERE YOU, MISS STARR, I'D BE AFRAID TO TAKE STANKIE'S PLACE IN THIS FASHION SHOW
WHY?
WELL, GOODNESS SAKES! THE MURDERER MIGHT BE LURKING BACK OF THAT CURTAIN THIS VERY....
OH!
Reg U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1944, by The Chicago Tribune
I SENT OUT FOR YOUR LUNCH, MISS STARR. I'M NOT TAKING ANY CHANCES OF LOSING YOU AGAIN!
Dale Messick

AS BRENDA NIBBLES AT THE LUNCH CEDRIC MODISTE HAD SENT IN.....
ALL RIGHT, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS, I'LL FINISH A LITTLE SNACK, AND GO HOME.
BUT I SURE WOULD LIKE TO FIGURE OUT THIS MESS!
MEW! MEW!
Dale Messick
...HELLO, LITTLE FELLOW. SO YOU'D LIKE SOME OF MY MILK? O.K.
AND NOW, WE'LL HAVE OUR MILK TOGETHER.
Dale Messick
MEW MEW
?

THIS MILK HAS BEEN POISONED! I GAVE SOME TO THAT POOR, LITTLE KITTEN.
AND, NOW, LET'S LOOK IN THE PARCEL ROOM OF THE MAIN STREET STATION.
LOOK, FREDDIE, IT'S A PITCHER OF DAT DAME WHO CHECKED DAT BIG FIDDLE CASE HERE YESTERDAY!
FLASH
YOU....YOU MEAN YOU THINK THERE'S A BODY IN THERE?
COULD BE. TRY TO LIFT IT!
ARE YA GONNA OPEN IT BEFORE YA CALL THE COPS?
WE AIN'T GONNA CALL NO COPS. I'M GONNA CALL THAT GIRL REPORTER ON THE FLASH.
YA MEAN BRENDA STARR?
I SEEN HER ONCE, AND SHE'S SOME DOLL!
I GET IT. THINK YOU'LL MAKE A HIT WITH HER?
PARCEL ROOM
THINK? I KNOW I WILL! HAND ME THAT TELEPHONE, FREDDIE.
AYE, AYE SIR!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
SCENE—MAIN ST. STATION....
BRENDA HAS JUST OPENED THE CASE OF THE BIG VIOLIN.
A MUMMY!
JEEPERS! MISS STARR, UNWRAP IT, AND SEE IF IT'S....
IT'S STANKIE, ALL RIGHT!
THIS MATERIAL.... WHERE HAVE I SEEN IT BEFORE ?
HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT? HERE'S A FRONT PAGE SCOOP, SO BRENDA GETS ALL STEAMED UP OVER THE FANCY WRAPPINGS !
PESKY! I'VE GOT A CRAZY HUNCH....
TWENTY MINUTES LATER
HELLO, BILL, HELP ME FIND A PICTURE OF MADAME IGOR?
SWELL, THANKS.
MADAME IGOR
BRENDA TAKES THE PICTURE TO THE ART DEPARTMENT OF THE FLASH.
I WANT THE ASSISTANCE OF SOME UP AND COMING ARTIST WHO SPECIALIZES IN PUTTING MUSTACHES ON PRETTY GIRLS IN SUBWAY STATIONS.
OH, MISS STARR, I COULDN'T....
NOT ON ME! IT'S THIS PICTURE I WANT DOCTORED UP.
LATER
NOW, HERE'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO HAVE YOU DO....

THE BOYS IN THE BAGGAGE ROOM FOUND STANKIE'S BODY STUFFED IN MADAME IGOR'S FIDDLE CASE WITH THIS MATERIAL WRAPPED AROUND IT...WHERE HAVE I SEEN THIS CLOTH BEFORE?
12-3
LATER— IN THE ART DEPT OF THE FLASH.
JOE, I WANT YOU TO PUT A PIECE OF TRANSPARENT PAPER OVER THIS PICTURE OF MADAME IGOR, AND....
....NOW TRACE OVER THE FEATURES, BUT LEAVE OFF THE HAIR-DO, AND PUT ON A SMALL, POINTED MUSTACHE. THAT'S IT.... LOOK!
I'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING LATER...GOT PLACES TO GO.
SEE YOU DON'T FORGET, WE BRUSH PUSHERS COULD USE SOME EXCITEMENT, TOO.
BRENDA'S INVESTIGATION TAKES HER BACK TO THE FASHION SHOW-ROOMS.
DRESSING ROOM NO. 21
12-4
YES, THERE'S THE COSTUME I MODELED....AND IT'S OF THE SAME MATERIAL THAT WAS WRAPPED AROUND STANKIE'S BODY!
OH! OH! JUST THE PERSON I DON'T WANT TO SEE NOW!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MY GOWNS?

CEDRIC MODISTE.... I FOUND YOUR MISSING MODEL THIS AFTERNOON....
WHAT!
....WRAPPED UP IN THE SAME MATERIAL AS THIS SWIM SUIT YOU DESIGNED....AND STUFFED IN YOUR FIDDLE CASE!
Reg U.S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1948, by The Chicago Tribune
MADAME IGOR!!!
Dale Messick
GET OVER TO THAT PHONE AND CALL HEADQUARTERS.
NO—NOT THAT! I COULDN'T FACE IT!
GET UP....AND PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
Reg U.S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1948, by The Chicago Tribune
OUCH!
...AND NOW, YOU DO AS I SAY!

ALL MY LIFE I'VE HATED BEAUTIFUL WOMEN LIKE YOU. BUT WHY SHOULD I? CLOTHES MAKE THE WOMAN!
BRING THOSE TWO CANS OF CLEANING FLUID HERE!
Dale Messick
CAUTION
INFLAMM
WHILE BACK IN THE CITY ROOM OF THE FLASH.
WHERE'S BRENDA?
ARE YOU STILL TRYING TO KEEP UP WITH YOUR GIRL FRIEND?
YOU KNOW, TOM, SOME TIME BRENDA'S GONNA BE ON THE SPOT, AND....
OK. JUST CUT THE RIBBON, AND TELL ME WHERE SHE IS!
MILK
DO AS I SAY, AND POUR THE CLEANING FLUID ON MY GOWNS.
YE GODS! MADAME IGOR'S OUT OF HER MIND. THIS STUFF IS INFLAMMABLE!
NEVER AGAIN WILL THEY BEAUTIFY WOMEN!
AND NOW YOU'RE NEXT!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
SCENE: IN THE CITY ROOM OF THE FLASH.
TOM, HAVE YOU HEARD THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON THE STANKIE CASE?
LOOK WHAT BRENDA HAD A FLASH ARTIST DO WITH THIS TRACING PAPER OVER THE PICTURE OF MADAME IGOR.
MADAME IGOR
IT'S CEDRIC MODISTE!
I GET IT! THESE TWO ARE THE SAME PERSON. BRENDA'S IN HER GLORY WHEN SHE GETS HER MAN, OR, IN THIS CASE, THE WOMAN.
HEY, THE INTERNATIONAL FASHION SHOWROOMS ARE ON FIRE!
GOOD!... THAT'S WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS,...BIGGER AND BETTER FASHION SHOW FIRES!
BUT THAT'S WHERE BRENDA WENT!
WHAT?
GOOD GOSH!
BETWEEN THIS FIRE AND.... AND THAT MANIAC, I HAVEN'T A CHANCE!
LATER
GET BACK!
OH, TOM, WE GOTTA SAVE BRENDA!
SUDDENLY, SILHOUETTED AGAINST A FLAMING WINDOW....
LOOK!

BRENDA HAS JUST BEEN CARRIED OUT OF THE BLAZING SHOWROOMS BY A MYSTERIOUS STRANGER.....
THANK HEAVENS!
I'LL TAKE HER.
Dale Messick
HE'S GONE!
MAY WE SEE MISS STARR, NOW?
CERTAINLY. SHE'LL BE AS GOOD AS NEW IN A FEW DAYS.
QUIET
Dale Messick
HI, GORGEOUS. HOW GOES IT?
I'M OK. BUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO CEDRIC MODISTE .... I MEAN MADAME IGOR? SHE DIDN'T....
M5
YES, THEY'RE STILL SEARCHING IN THE RUINS.
THEN.... WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHY SHE KILLED STANKIE AND BURNED ALL THE BEAUTIFUL CLOTHES SHE DESIGNED.
OH, YES WE WILL!
COME IN, DETECTIVE TRAVERTS.
M5

MADAME IGOR WAS A GREAT MUSICIAN....PERIOD. SHE NEVER DESIGNED A COSTUME IN HER LIFE!
Dale Messick
ALL THE CLOTHES SHE HAD IN THE FASHION SHOW WERE DESIGNED BY STANKIE!
SO THAT'S WHY SHE KILLED HER!
EVIDENTLY STANKIE GOT TIRED OF BEING A 'SILENT PARTNER,' AND THREATENED TO EXPOSE HER....
WELL, I'M GLAD IT'S OVER!..
...A....ER.... DETECTIVE TRAVERTS, DID....DID YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING ABOUT THE MAN WHO SAVED MY LIFE?
COME ON, BRENDA, DON'T ACT LIKE A ROMANTIC SCHOOL GIRL...SOME GUY PULLS YOU OUT OF THE FIRE....
...BRENDA PULLS IN THE FLOWERS!
SO WHAT?
SO-O-O I.... I....JUST WANTED TO THANK HIM.
....AFTER ALL, HE DID SAVE MY LIFE!
SAY, WHAT KIND OF FLOWERS ARE THESE?
Dale Messick

BLACK ORCHIDS... HOW LOVELY! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANY BEFORE!
GOSH-ALL-FRIDAY, NEITHER HAVE I!

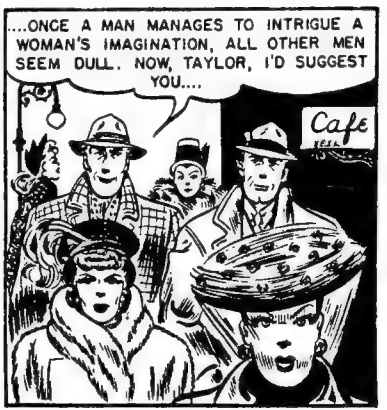
WHO SENT THEM?
THERE'S NO CARD.
?
CHART

OH, MAYBE HE SENT THEM!
COME ON, TRAVERTS, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE AND GET SOME FRESH AIR.
Dale Messick
CHART

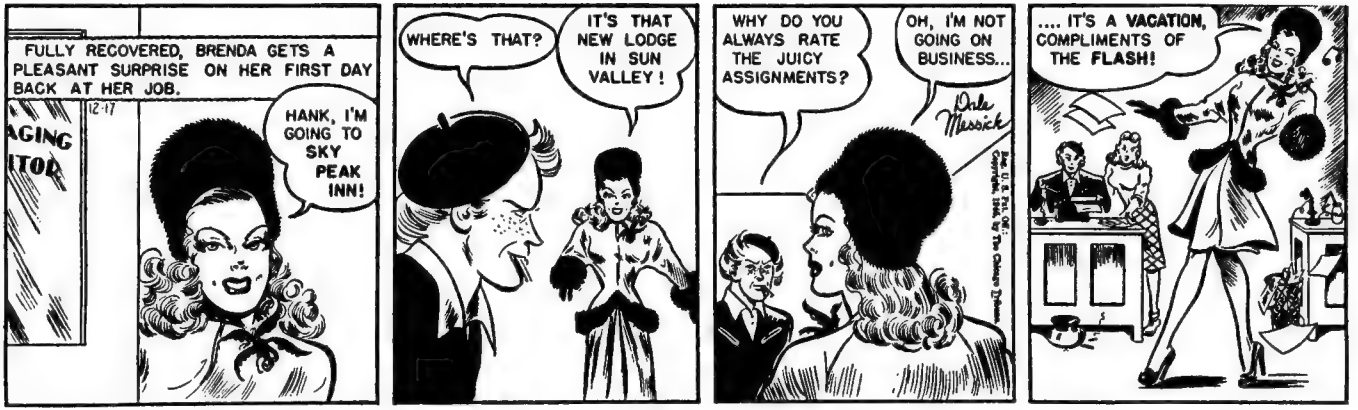
TRAVERTS, WILL YOU DO ME A FAVOR?
I'LL TRY, TAYLOR.
QUIET PLEASE

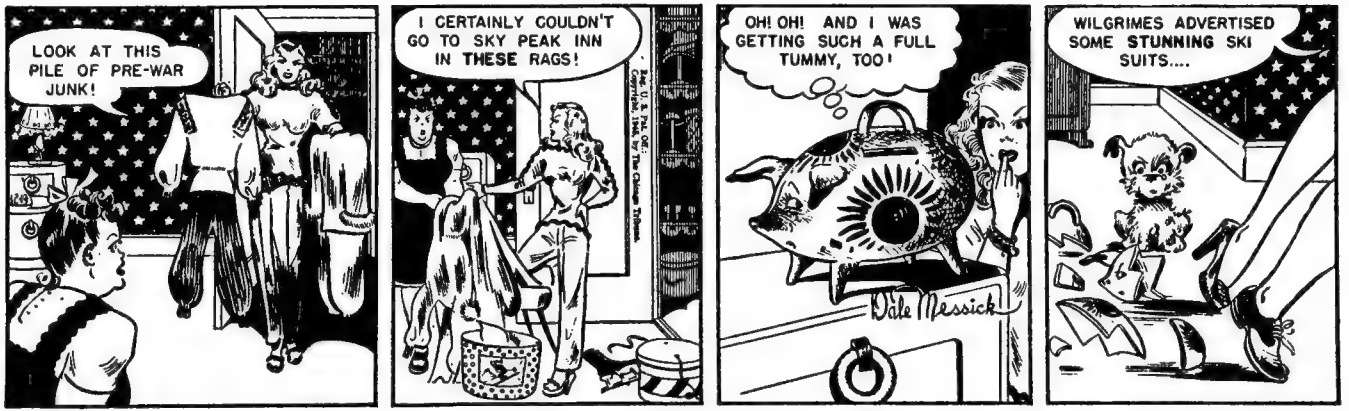
GET A LINE ON THIS LIFE SAVER BEFORE BRENDA LOSES HER HEAD.
Dale Messick

BLACK ORCHIDS, BLACK EYE PATCHES.... WHY DO WOMEN FALL FOR THAT TRIPE?

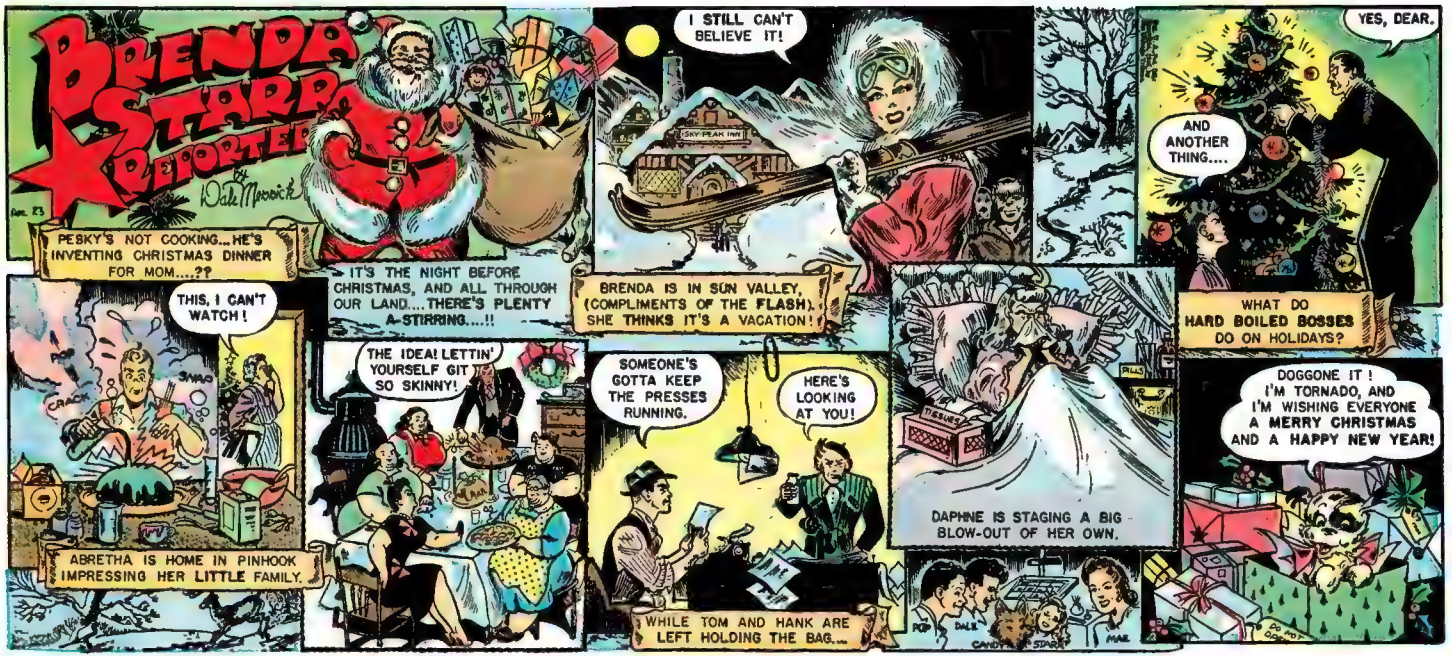

....ONCE A MAN MANAGES TO INTRIGUE A WOMAN'S IMAGINATION, ALL OTHER MEN SEEM DULL. NOW, TAYLOR, I'D SUGGEST YOU....
Cafe

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Walt Maslick
THE COPY GIRLS ON THE FLASH GIVE BRENDA'S LATEST ADVENTURE THE ONE-TWO-THREE.
WASN'T IT THRILLING....
...THE WAY BRENDA WAS RESCUED FROM THAT BURNING BUILDING BY THAT HANDSOME STRANGER?
THEY SAY HE SENT HER BLACK ORCHIDS.
GEE, I'VE NEVER EVEN SEEN ONE!
SOME DAY I'M GOING TO BE A REPORTER LIKE MISS STARR.
HA! I CAN JUST SEE YOU FACING FIRE AND BRIMSTONE!
I'LL BET YOU'D DIE ON THE SPOT! I KNOW I WOULD.
I WOULD NOT...WHY I'M EVEN GLAD THAT FIENDISH MADAME IGOR PERISHED IN THE FIRE. SO THERE!
...BUT I'M SORRY SHE HAD TO BURN UP ALL THOSE BEAUTIFUL CLOTHES, TOO.
...THAT WAS BECAUSE SHE NEVER DESIGNED ANY OF THEM HERSELF. SHE STOLE THEM FROM MISS STANKIE!
WHAT! HOW MARVELOUS!
GIRLS, DON'T YOU SEE? THAT'S WHY MADAME IGOR KILLED HER MODEL!
WHY DOESN'T SOMEONE PUT HER WISE? THE STANKIE CASE HAS BEEN PAST HISTORY FOR HOURS.
BRENDA, WHAT A DARLING OUTFIT....AND YOU'RE WEARING ONE OF THOSE BLACK ORCHIDS!
LET ME FEEL IT!
DID THE MYSTERY MAN GIVE THEM TO YOU?
GEE, SUCH A DIFFERENT ODOR!
IT MAKES ME KINDA DIZZY!
THE WHOLE LOT OF YOU ARE DIZZY! MISS STARR, COME TO MY OFFICE AT ONCE!
oh! oh!
LATER
MANAGING EDITOR
TRA-LA-LA
NOW WHAT?


FULLY RECOVERED, BRENDA GETS A PLEASANT SURPRISE ON HER FIRST DAY BACK AT HER JOB.
12-17
HANK, I'M GOING TO SKY PEAK INN!
WHERE'S THAT?
IT'S THAT NEW LODGE IN SUN VALLEY!
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS RATE THE JUICY ASSIGNMENTS?
OH, I'M NOT GOING ON BUSINESS...
Dale Messick
.... IT'S A VACATION, COMPLIMENTS OF THE FLASH!
NOW THAT YOUR HEART THROB WON'T BE WITH US FOR THE GALA SEASON, WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS, TOM?
AT LEAST THIS TRIP TO SUN VALLEY WILL TAKE HER MIND OFF THAT HANDSOME MYSTERY MAN, WHO RESCUED HER FROM THE FIRE....EH, TOM?
YES, BUT DON'T FORGET SHE'LL BE RUNNING INTO LARRY NICKELS AGAIN!
I REMEMBER HIM. HE'S THAT YOUNG EDITOR OF THE CLOUD NEWSPAPER OUT THERE.
GLAD I'M NOT IN LOVE WITH A GLAMOUR GIRL! MY MILLIE MIGHT NOT BE A 4 STAR HIT....BUT SHE'S MINE....ALL MINE!
TOM, YOU SHOULD HAVE WORN THAT BOW TIE SOONER!
FLASH

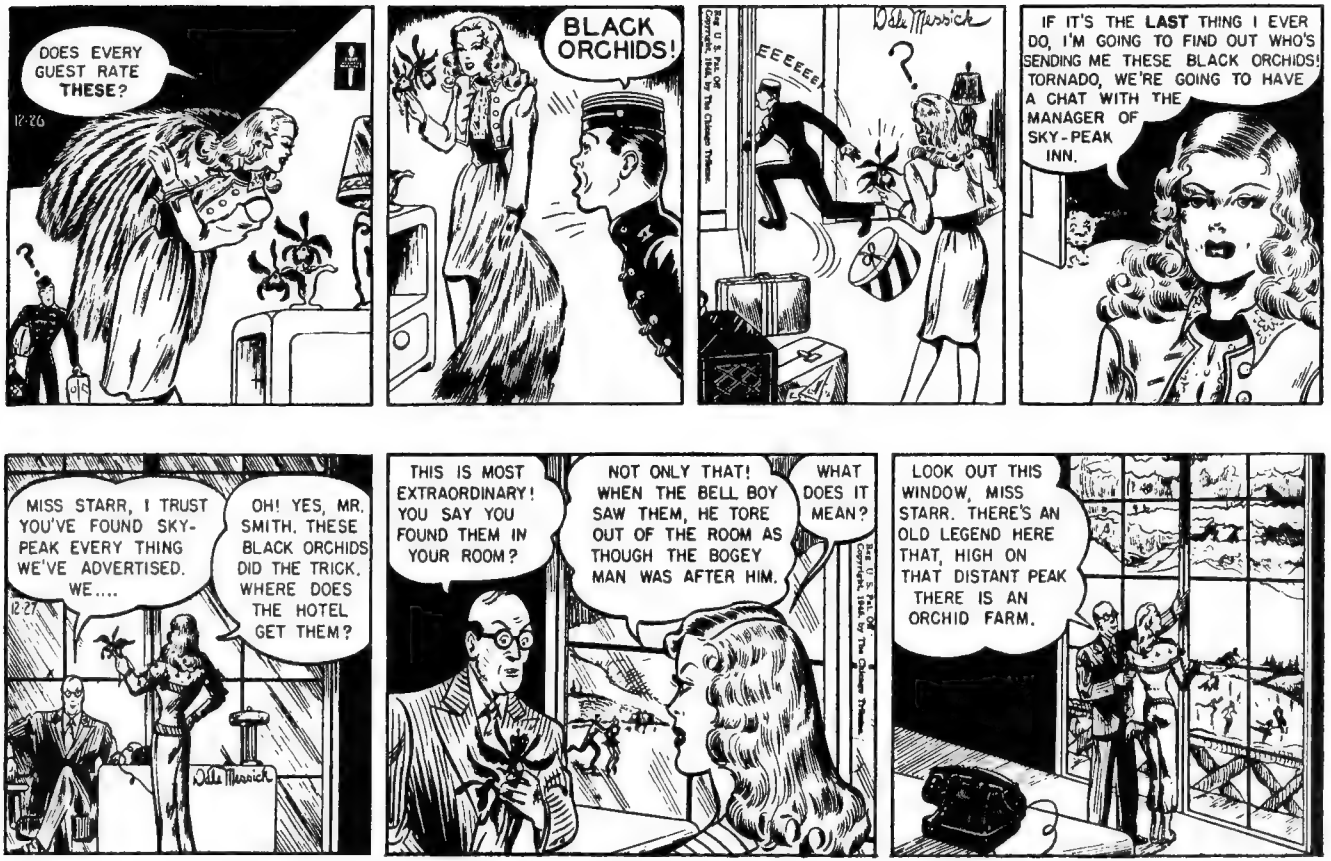

LOOK AT THIS PILE OF PRE-WAR JUNK!
I CERTAINLY COULDN'T GO TO SKY PEAK INN IN THESE RAGS!
Reg. U.S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1946, by The Chicago Tribune
OH! OH! AND I WAS GETTING SUCH A FULL TUMMY, TOO!
Dale Messick
WILGRIMES ADVERTISED SOME STUNNING SKI SUITS....
WISH YOU WERE COMING TO SUN VALLEY WITH ME, ABRETHA.
NO, THANKS, I'D RATHER GO HOME.
THERE SHOULD BE A LAW AGAINST MAKING A RESPECTABLE DOG TRAVEL LIKE A CRATE OF EGGS!
IF TOM'S TAKING US TO THE STATION IN A TAXI, HE'D BETTER BE GETTING HERE.
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1946, by The Chicago Tribune
A TAXI? HE'D BETTER GET A TRUCK!
Dale Messick

ABRETHA'S TRAIN PULLS OUT FIRST, TOM, SO DON'T GET OUR LUGGAGE MIXED.
BULLETIN
GOOD-BYE...HAVE A MERRY CHRISTMAS!
SAY HELLO TO UNCLE FRANK AND AUNT EMMY.
SMACK
TRACK 29
LATER
SKY PEAK SPECIAL
WELL, BRENDA I HATE TO SAY GOOD-BYE.
OH, SILLY, I'LL ONLY BE GONE A FEW DAYS!
Dale Messick
PINHOOK, INDIANA, HERE I COME!
HAVE YOUR TICKETS READY.
TORNADO! WHERE'S TORNADO?
...WHILE ON THE LIMITED TO SUN VALLEY
ARF! ARF!
I'VE GOT TORNADO, AND ABRETHA HAS MY CLOTHES!
ARF! ARF!
Dale Messick


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
by Dale Messick
PESKY'S NOT COOKING...HE'S INVENTING CHRISTMAS DINNER FOR MOM....??
IT'S THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS, AND ALL THROUGH OUR LAND....THERE'S PLENTY A-STIRRING....!!
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
SKY PEAK INN
BRENDA IS IN SUN VALLEY, (COMPLIMENTS OF THE FLASH). SHE THINKS IT'S A VACATION!
YES, DEAR.
AND ANOTHER THING....
WHAT DO HARD BOILED BOSSES DO ON HOLIDAYS?
THIS, I CAN'T WATCH!
CRACK
SNAP
ABRETHA IS HOME IN PINHOOK IMPRESSING HER LITTLE FAMILY.
THE IDEA! LETTIN' YOURSELF GIT SO SKINNY!
SOMEONE'S GOTTA KEEP THE PRESSES RUNNING.
HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU!
WHILE TOM AND HANK ARE LEFT HOLDING THE BAG....
TISSUES
DAPHNE IS STAGING A BIG BLOW-OUT OF HER OWN.
POP
DALE
CANDY
STARR
MAE
DOGGONE IT! I'M TORNADO, AND I'M WISHING EVERYONE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

GOSH! SKY-PEAK INN IS REALLY TOPS!
OH! YES, MISS STARR, WE HAVE YOUR ROOM READY. WELCOME TO SUN VALLEY!
HA! HA! I KNOW EVERY THING'S OK., MISS STARR, 'CAUSE NO ONE'S EVER HAD THIS ROOM. YOU'RE THE FIRST GUEST.
WELL, I AM IMPRESSED!
DO THESE GO WITH THE ROOM, TOO?
THESE WHAT, MISS STARR?

SKY PEAK INN
12-25
MERRY CHRISTMAS


DOES EVERY GUEST RATE THESE?
12-26
BLACK ORCHIDS!
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1944, by The Chicago Tribune.
EEEEEE!
Dale Messick
IF IT'S THE LAST THING I EVER DO, I'M GOING TO FIND OUT WHO'S SENDING ME THESE BLACK ORCHIDS! TORNADO, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A CHAT WITH THE MANAGER OF SKY-PEAK INN.
MISS STARR, I TRUST YOU'VE FOUND SKY-PEAK EVERY THING WE'VE ADVERTISED. WE....
12-27
OH! YES, MR. SMITH. THESE BLACK ORCHIDS DID THE TRICK. WHERE DOES THE HOTEL GET THEM?
Dale Messick
THIS IS MOST EXTRAORDINARY! YOU SAY YOU FOUND THEM IN YOUR ROOM?
NOT ONLY THAT! WHEN THE BELL BOY SAW THEM, HE TORE OUT OF THE ROOM AS THOUGH THE BOGEY MAN WAS AFTER HIM.
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off. Copyright, 1944, by The Chicago Tribune.
LOOK OUT THIS WINDOW, MISS STARR. THERE'S AN OLD LEGEND HERE THAT, HIGH ON THAT DISTANT PEAK THERE IS AN ORCHID FARM.

SOMEWHERE ON THAT MOUNTAIN PEAK THERE IS SUPPOSED TO BE A BLACK ORCHID FARM!
BUT ORCHIDS ARE A TROPICAL FLOWER...SOUNDS FANTASTIC!
12-28
THERE IS A SUPERSTITION THAT BLACK ORCHIDS BRING BAD LUCK.
HA! HA! NO WONDER THE BELL BOY DROPPED ME ME LIKE A HOT POTATO!
PERSONALLY, MISS STARR, I NEVER PUT ANY STOCK IN THIS FOLKLORE.... BUT NOW, I WONDER.....
.... HOW THEY GOT IN YOUR ROOM, OR WHO PUT THEM THERE.... I WOULDN'T KNOW!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO SOLVE THE BLACK ORCHID LEGEND!
12-29
I'M GOING TO CLIMB THAT MOUNTAIN AND SEE IF THERE REALLY IS AN ORCHID FARM! COULD YOU GET ME A GUIDE?
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. NO ONE EVER GOES UP THERE!
THEN I'LL HAVE TO GO ALONE, I GUESS.
ARE YOU INSANE?
AS MANAGER OF SKY-PEAK INN, I FORBID YOU TO GO!

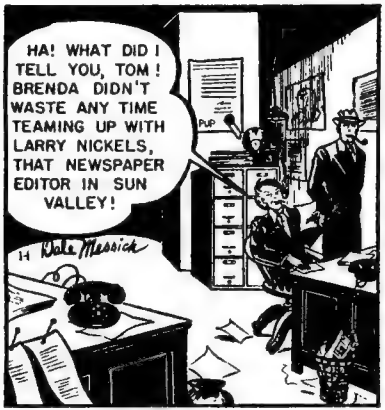
BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
THIS REALLY HAS ME GUESSING THIS TIME.
THE VERY FIRST DAY OF HER VACATION IN SUN VALLEY, BRENDA FINDS ANOTHER BOX OF BLACK ORCHIDS IN HER ROOM AT SKY PEAK INN.
...YES, I CAN SEE THE MOUNTAIN PEAK FROM THIS WINDOW....
THERE IS A LEGEND HERE THAT A BLACK ORCHID FARM IS ON THAT MOUNTAIN....
NONE OF THE HOTEL STAFF WILL COME NEAR ME BECAUSE THESE WERE HERE IN MY ROOM WHEN I ARRIVED.
WELL, I DON'T FALL FOR ALL THIS SUPERSTITIOUS BUNK, ...AND, IF I CAN'T GET A GUIDE TO TAKE ME UP THAT MOUNTAIN....
I'LL GO ALONE!
WHAT AM I SAYING?
LATER
A HIKE UP THAT MOUNTAIN? NOTHING DOING!
MISS STARR, YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
THAT'S A TWO DAY TRIP!
ISN'T THERE ONE MAN HERE WHO WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ME UP?
FOR YOU, BRENDA STARR.... I'D SWIM THE DEEPEST OCEAN!
LARRY NICKELS!
BEAUTIFUL AS EVER.... BUT, STILL SLEUTHING I SEE....
...I KNOW YOU'LL TAKE ME UP, LARRY.
LOVE ME, HONEY?
?

WHILE STILL LOOKING FOR A GUIDE TO TAKE HER UP THE FORBIDDEN MOUNTAIN, BRENDA RUNS INTO AN OLD BEAU....
I JUST MUST GET TO THAT MYSTERIOUS ORCHID FARM! YOU'LL TAKE ME, WON'T YOU?
ON ONE CONDITION, BEAUTIFUL.

YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED....STILL BARGAINING!
FOR YOU, BABY, I'LL NEVER STOP BARGAINING!

....I LOVE YOU.... BUT THAT'S TOO DANGEROUS A MISSION!
THEN I'LL GO ALONE!
Dick Messick

O.K. YOU WIN....
BUT, LARRY, THINK WHAT SWELL STORIES WE'LL GET FOR OUR PAPERS!


HA! WHAT DID I TELL YOU, TOM! BRENDA DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME TEAMING UP WITH LARRY NICKELS, THAT NEWSPAPER EDITOR IN SUN VALLEY!
Dick Messick

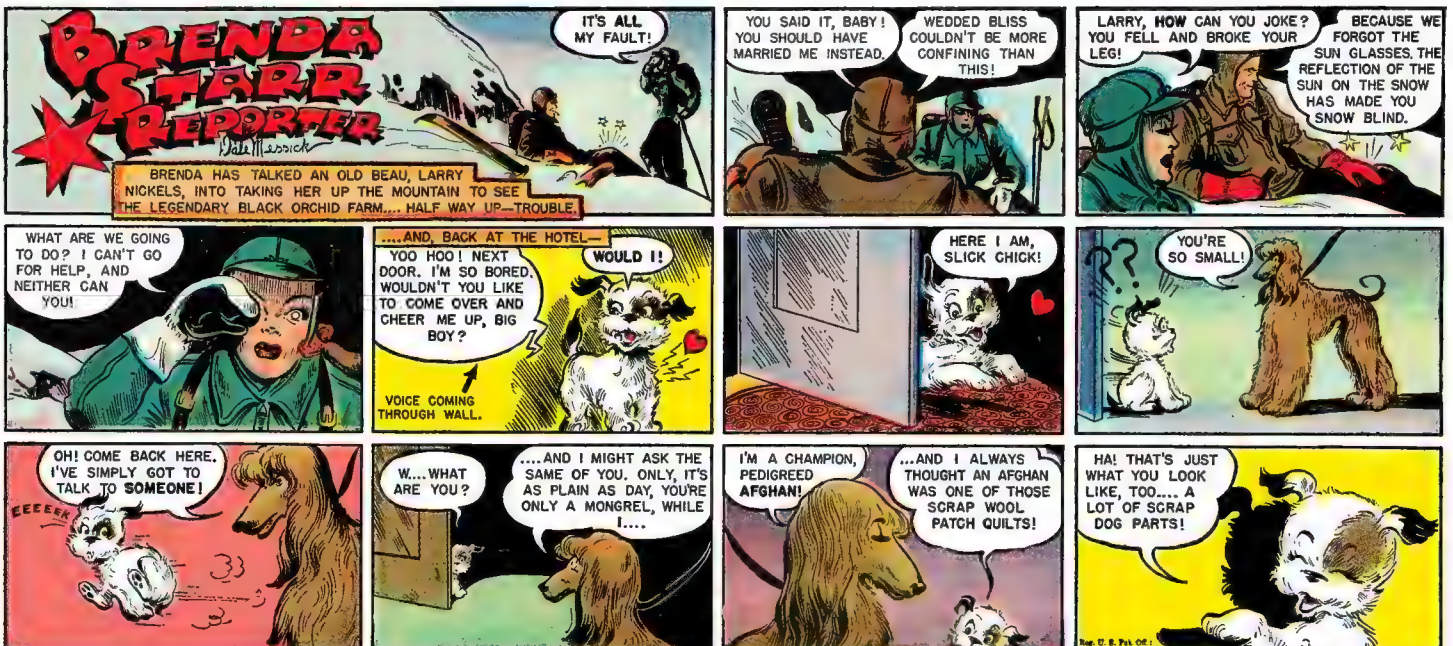
HMM....SHE AND NICKELS ARE ON THE TRAIL OF A GOOD STORY, WHICH CALLS FOR SOME MOUNTAIN CLIMBING...
I THOUGHT SHE WENT TO SUN VALLEY FOR A VACATION!

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING?

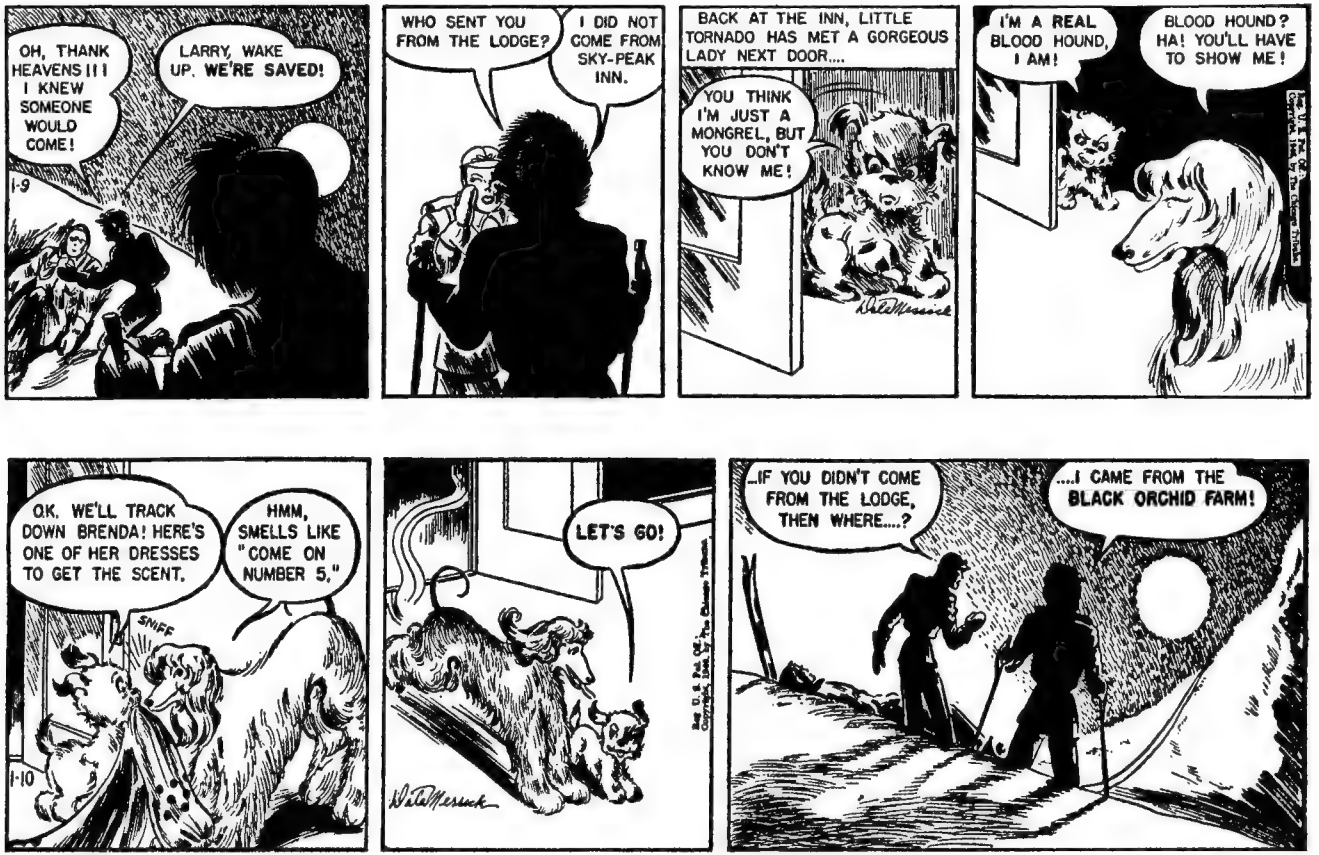
WHILE IN A GENERAL ATMOSPHERE OF MISGIVING, BRENDA AND LARRY START UP THE MOUNTAIN IN SEARCH OF A MYSTERIOUS BLACK ORCHID FARM.
BET THEY NEVER COME BACK!
THEY CAN HAVE IT!
THEY'RE CRAZY!

BRENDA AND I GOT OUR LUGGAGE MIXED. SHE GOT TORNADO. I GOT THAT BAG OF UNDIES!
TOO BAD YOU DIDN'T GET SOMETHING OF BRENDA'S WE COULD USE.
"TOO TIRED TO WASH THE DISHES, TOO TIRED.... HOW GOES IT?
GEE, LARRY LET'S PITCH CAMP. I'M EXHAUSTED!
I'VE GOT A TERRIFIC HEADACHE. MAYBE SOME HOT COFFEE WILL DO THE TRICK!
SURE WISH WE HADN'T FORGOTTEN OUR SUN GLASSES! MY EYES CAN TAKE THIS GLARE. I'M USED TO IT.....
...BUT YOUR POOR, LITTLE.... I MEAN.... GREAT BIG WONDERFUL EYES!
THEY HURT!
EYES BETTER NOW?
I.... I GUESS SO.
LARRY, DO YOU THINK WE WILL FIND A BLACK ORCHID FARM AT THE TOP OF THIS MOUNTAIN?
BRENDA, I THINK WE'D BETTER GO BACK.
GO BACK, WHY?
TO GET OUR SUN GLASSES! HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF SNOW BLINDNESS?
SURE, BUT IT WON'T LAST SO LONG, WILL IT?
BRENDA, LOOK OUT!

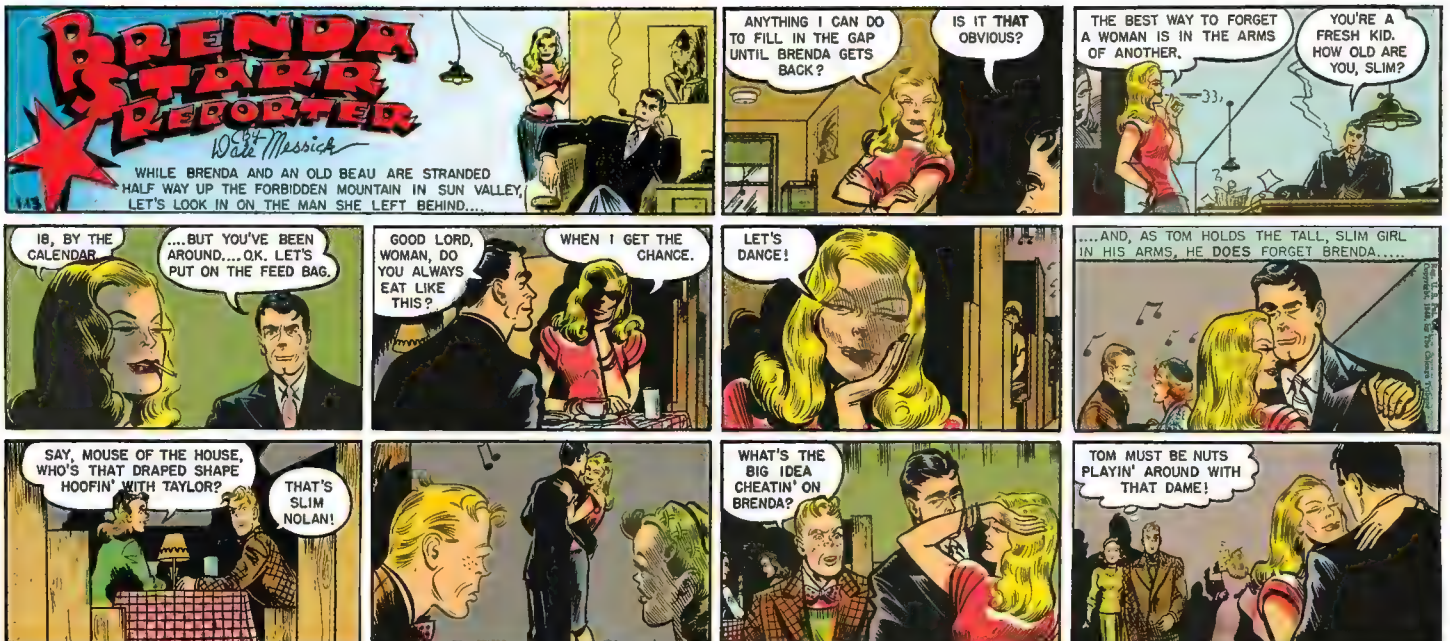
BRENDA, LOOK OUT!
??
Dale Messick
HEY! BEAUTIFUL, IT'S SORTA IMPORTANT FOR MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS TO WATCH WHERE THEY'RE GOING!
YES, I KNOW, LARRY, ONLY....
I CAN'T SEEM TO SEE A THING!
GOOD HEAVENS! I WAS AFRAID THIS WOULD HAPPEN. YOU'RE SNOW BLIND!
LARRY, HOW LONG WILL THIS SNOW BLINDNESS LAST?
SEVERAL DAYS. TOO BAD, BRENDA, WE CAN'T GO ON. WE'LL HAVE TO RETURN TO SKY-PEAK INN.
HOURS LATER- LARRY AND BRENDA ARE SLOWLY DESCENDING.... WHEN SUDDENLY...
BRENDA, WHERE ARE YOU? ARE YOU O.K.?
YES, BUT COME AND GET ME. I CAN'T SEE, YOU KNOW!
.... AND I CAN'T MOVE. MY LEG IS BROKEN!
Dale Messick
HOLY COW! JUST WHO'S GOING TO HELP WHO, NOW?


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
IT'S ALL MY FAULT!
BRENDA HAS TALKED AN OLD BEAU, LARRY NICKELS, INTO TAKING HER UP THE MOUNTAIN TO SEE THE LEGENDARY BLACK ORCHID FARM.... HALF WAY UP—TROUBLE.
YOU SAID IT, BABY! YOU SHOULD HAVE MARRIED ME INSTEAD.
WEDDED BLISS COULDN'T BE MORE CONFINING THAN THIS!
LARRY, HOW CAN YOU JOKE? YOU FELL AND BROKE YOUR LEG!
BECAUSE WE FORGOT THE SUN GLASSES. THE REFLECTION OF THE SUN ON THE SNOW HAS MADE YOU SNOW BLIND.
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? I CAN'T GO FOR HELP, AND NEITHER CAN YOU!
....AND, BACK AT THE HOTEL—
YOO HOO! NEXT DOOR. I'M SO BORED. WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO COME OVER AND CHEER ME UP, BIG BOY?
WOULD I!
VOICE COMING THROUGH WALL.
HERE I AM, SLICK CHICK!
YOU'RE SO SMALL!
OH! COME BACK HERE. I'VE SIMPLY GOT TO TALK TO SOMEONE!
EEEEEK
W....WHAT ARE YOU?
....AND I MIGHT ASK THE SAME OF YOU. ONLY, IT'S AS PLAIN AS DAY, YOU'RE ONLY A MONGREL, WHILE I....
I'M A CHAMPION, PEDIGREED AFGHAN!
...AND I ALWAYS THOUGHT AN AFGHAN WAS ONE OF THOSE SCRAP WOOL PATCH QUILTS!
HA! THAT'S JUST WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE, TOO.... A LOT OF SCRAP DOG PARTS!

DARKNESS FINDS BRENDA AND LARRY STILL STRANDED HALF WAY UP THE FORBIDDEN MOUNTAIN.
WHAT GOOD WILL FLARES DO? NO ONE EVER COMES UP HERE!
1-7
Walt Messick
....EVEN IF THEY DID SEE THE ROCKET AT SKY-PEAK INN, THEY WOULD BE AFRAID TO COME.
WE'RE IN A PRETTY TOUGH SPOT, BABY....ME WITH A BROKEN LEG, AND YOU, SNOW BLIND....
IF THESE FLARES FAIL....
....SOMEONE JUST HAS TO SEE THEM!
THE SECOND FLARE GOES UP.....
1-8
ALL WE CAN DO NOW IS TO WAIT FOR WHATEVER FATE HAS IN STORE FOR US.
I CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER WAY TO DIE!
LARRY, UNABLE TO KEEP HIS BLOOD CIRCULATING, BECAUSE OF A BROKEN LEG, FALLS ASLEEP.
LARRY! LARRY!
Walt Messick
I CAN'T LET HIM FREEZE!
THAT'S NOT NECESSARY, MISS STARR.
LARRY, I'M GOING TO GET HELP.


OH, THANK HEAVENS!!! I KNEW SOMEONE WOULD COME!
LARRY, WAKE UP. WE'RE SAVED!
1-9
WHO SENT YOU FROM THE LODGE?
I DID NOT COME FROM SKY-PEAK INN.
BACK AT THE INN, LITTLE TORNADO HAS MET A GORGEOUS LADY NEXT DOOR....
YOU THINK I'M JUST A MONGREL, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW ME!
I'M A REAL BLOOD HOUND, I AM!
BLOOD HOUND? HA! YOU'LL HAVE TO SHOW ME!
O.K. WE'LL TRACK DOWN BRENDA! HERE'S ONE OF HER DRESSES TO GET THE SCENT.
HMM, SMELLS LIKE "COME ON NUMBER 5."
SNIFF
1-10
LET'S GO!
...IF YOU DIDN'T COME FROM THE LODGE, THEN WHERE....?
....I CAME FROM THE BLACK ORCHID FARM!

WHO ARE YOU?
I'LL TAKE YOU THE REST OF THE WAY UP TO THE BLACK ORCHID FARM... DON'T BE FRIGHTENED.
1-11
SUDDENLY, SHE FEELS HERSELF LIFTED BY STRONG ARMS.
NO! NO! WE CAN'T LEAVE LARRY!
UNABLE TO SEE, BRENDA PULLS OFF ONE OF HER GLOVES....
THE MYSTERY MAN!
LET'S FOLLOW SLIM NOLAN, A COPY GIRL ON THE FLASH...
I SUPPOSE IT'S BECAUSE I LIKE BRENDA STARR...
1-12
.... THAT I'VE STAYED ON THE BENCH THIS LONG....
SHE CAN'T WANT TOM TAYLOR THE WAY I DO....
HE THINKS HE'S IN LOVE WITH BRENDA, BUT I KNOW I'M HIS KIND OF WOMAN!
SO FAR, HE HE DOESN'T KNOW I'M ALIVE....
....BUT, STARTING NOW, HE WILL!


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
WHILE BRENDA AND AN OLD BEAU ARE STRANDED HALF WAY UP THE FORBIDDEN MOUNTAIN IN SUN VALLEY, LET'S LOOK IN ON THE MAN SHE LEFT BEHIND....
ANYTHING I CAN DO TO FILL IN THE GAP UNTIL BRENDA GETS BACK?
IS IT THAT OBVIOUS?
THE BEST WAY TO FORGET A WOMAN IS IN THE ARMS OF ANOTHER.
YOU'RE A FRESH KID. HOW OLD ARE YOU, SLIM?
IS, BY THE CALENDAR.
....BUT YOU'VE BEEN AROUND....O.K. LET'S PUT ON THE FEED BAG.
GOOD LORD, WOMAN, DO YOU ALWAYS EAT LIKE THIS?
WHEN I GET THE CHANCE.
LET'S DANCE!
....AND, AS TOM HOLDS THE TALL, SLIM GIRL IN HIS ARMS, HE DOES FORGET BRENDA.....
SAY, MOUSE OF THE HOUSE, WHO'S THAT DRAPED SHAPE HOOFIN' WITH TAYLOR?
THAT'S SLIM NOLAN!
WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA CHEATIN' ON BRENDA?
TOM MUST BE NUTS PLAYIN' AROUND WITH THAT DAME!

HAVE YA HEARD THE LATEST? TOM'S BEEN DATING SLIM NOLAN SINCE BRENDA'S BEEN AWAY AT SUN VALLEY!
1-14
I DON'T BLAME TOM. I'LL BET BRENDA'S HAVING PLENTY OF FUN HERSELF AT THAT SWANKY SKY-PEAK INN! BUT WHY DID TOM CHOOSE SLIM? I'VE WORKED HERE LONGER.
Dale Messick
SHHH, HERE COMES SLIM NOW!
WELL, ISN'T SOMEONE GOING TO WISH ME HAPPINESS?
FOR WHAT?
TOM TAYLOR AND I WERE MARRIED LAST NIGHT!
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU AND TOM ARE MARRIED!
1-15
LOOK!
AT THIS MOMENT, TOM WALKS INTO THE CITY ROOM WITH A TELEGRAM CLUTCHED IN HIS HAND.
BRENDA IS LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS AT SUN VALLEY!
HELLO, AIR LINES! I WANT A ONE WAY TICKET TO....
TOM, IT ISN'T YOUR JOB TO RESCUE BRENDA ANY MORE.
LATER
Dale Messick

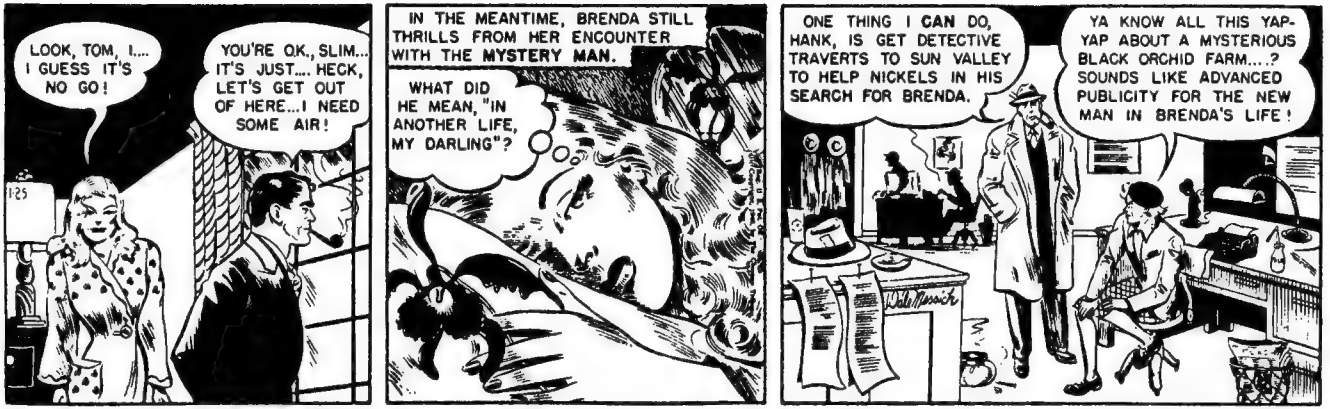
THAT DARKEST HOUR BEFORE DAWN... THE MYSTERY MAN ARRIVES AT THE BLACK ORCHID FARM WITH BRENDA.
1-16
Dale Messick
PUT MISS STARR IN BED. LET HER SLEEP AT LEAST 12 HOURS.
YES, SIR.
1-17
WHERE AM I?
OH, NOW I REMEMBER! I MUST BE AT THE BLACK ORCHID FARM! THE MYSTERY MAN BROUGHT ME HERE, AND....
Dale Messick
....LEFT POOR LARRY TO DIE ON THE MOUNTAIN BELOW!
IF I COULD ONLY SEE....!

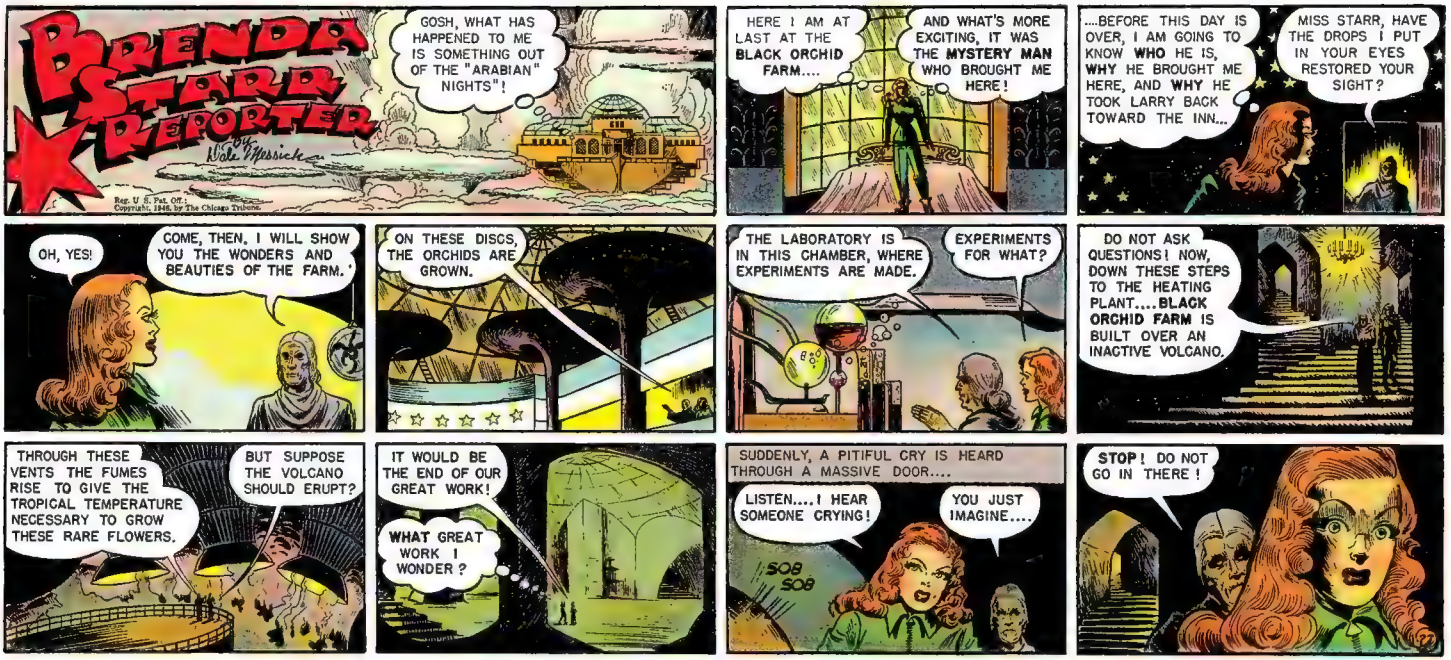
SOME ONE'S COMING!
DO NOT BE AFRAID. I HAVE DROPS THAT WILL RESTORE YOUR SIGHT.
WHY HAVE I BEEN BROUGHT HERE AND MY FRIEND, LARRY NICKELS, LEFT ON THE MOUNTAIN TO DIE.
HE WAS NOT LEFT TO DIE. HE WAS TAKEN BACK TO SKY-PEAK INN.
Dale Messick
I'LL RETURN IN AN HOUR. BE DRESSED AND READY TO SEE THE WONDERS OF BLACK ORCHID FARM!
GOSH, I AM BEGINNING TO SEE AGAIN!
BRENDA IS SPELLBOUND AT THE BEAUTY SURROUNDING HER.
IT'S LIKE A FAIRYLAND!
Dale Messick
AN HOUR LATER—
WHO'S THERE?
BRENDA CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE THRILL SHE FEELS AS SHE LOOKS INTO THE FACE OF THE MYSTERY MAN.

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
EVERY GUEST AT SKY-PEAK INN THEORIZES ON THE FATE OF BRENDA AND LARRY NICKELS, WHO HAVE GONE IN SEARCH OF THE BLACK ORCHID FARM
TOO BAD! SHE WAS A SWELL GIRL.
ALL THIS ISN'T GOING TO HELP THE ATMOSPHERE AROUND HERE. PEOPLE ARE LEAVING!
AFRAID THEY WILL FIND BLACK ORCHIDS IN THEIR ROOMS LIKE MISS STARR DID!
IT'S JUST TOO, TOO SPOOKY!
WHILE IN THE CITY ROOM OF THE FLASH...
I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE BRENDA'S REALLY LOST! SHE'S COME OUT OF SO MANY CLOSE CALLS.
SURE, SHE'LL TURN UP. JUST WAIT AND SEE!
I SUPPOSE TOM TAYLOR'S ALREADY ON HIS WAY OUT THERE.
GET THIS STRAIGHT, ALL OF YOU!
TOM IS NO LONGER BRENDA STARR'S "HANDY MAN." REMEMBER, WE ARE MARRIED?
AT THE FOOT OF THE SKI JUMP, NEAR SKY-PEAK INN....
SAY, AREN'T YOU LARRY NICKELS?
YES. DO YOU FELLOWS THINK YOU CAN GET ME UP TO THE LODGE? MY LEG IS BROKEN.
LATER
....WE COULDN'T DO MUCH. MISS STARR WAS SNOW BLIND, AND I....
...SO, WHEN IT GOT DARK, WE SENT UP FLARES. AFTER THAT, I MUST HAVE GONE TO SLEEP. IT'S THE LAST I REMEMBERED....
...UNTIL YOU MEN FOUND ME BY THE SKI JUMP IN THAT SLEEPING BAG....
WHOEVER PUT ME IN IT SAVED MY LIFE...BUT, WHERE IS BRENDA?

'TIME STANDS STILL, AS BRENDA WALKS TOWARD THE UNKNOWN MAN BEFORE HER
HER SENSES REEL AT THE MAGIC OF HIS TOUCH....
OH! MY DEAR, FORGIVE ME...I SHOULD NEVER HAVE BROUGHT YOU HERE !
Dale Messick
I HAVEN'T THE RIGHT TO HOLD YOU IN MY ARMS.
122
TELL ME WHO YOU ARE. I....I CAN'T ALWAYS THINK OF YOU AS THE MYSTERY MAN.
IT'S BEST THAT YOU NEVER KNOW MY NAME.
WHY ?
MAYBE IN ANOTHER LIFE, MY DARLING.
Dale Messick

LEFT ALONE, BRENDA THROWS HERSELF ON THE COUCH, REALIZING SHE HAS FALLEN....
....FOR A MAN WHOSE NAME I DON'T EVEN KNOW!
1-23
Dale Messick
IN THE MEANTIME, LARRY IS SPARING NO EXPENSE IN TRYING TO ORGANIZE A SEARCHING PARTY TO FIND BRENDA...
STOP THE PRESSES!
...NOT KNOWING THAT ONE HAS ALREADY BEEN STARTED.
SNIFF SNIFF
SNIFF SNIFF
AT LEAST HERE'S ONE MAN WHO THINKS ENOUGH OF BRENDA TO MOVE HEAVEN AND EARTH, WHEN SHE'S LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS.
1-24
Dale Messick
...LAY OFF TOM, OR I'LL CURL YOUR EDGES WITH MY EMERY BOARD!
WOW, SLIM, TAKE IT EASY!
BOY, TOM'S SURE GOT HIMSELF HOOKED UP WITH ONE ROUGH TOMATO!


LOOK, TOM, I.... I GUESS IT'S NO GO!
YOU'RE OK., SLIM... IT'S JUST.... HECK, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE...I NEED SOME AIR!
1-25
IN THE MEANTIME, BRENDA STILL THRILLS FROM HER ENCOUNTER WITH THE MYSTERY MAN.
WHAT DID HE MEAN, "IN ANOTHER LIFE, MY DARLING"?
ONE THING I CAN DO, HANK, IS GET DETECTIVE TRAVERTS TO SUN VALLEY TO HELP NICKELS IN HIS SEARCH FOR BRENDA.
YA KNOW ALL THIS YAP-YAP ABOUT A MYSTERIOUS BLACK ORCHID FARM....? SOUNDS LIKE ADVANCED PUBLICITY FOR THE NEW MAN IN BRENDA'S LIFE!
Walt Messick
SCENE— EXTRAVAGANT CITY ROOM OF THE CLOUD NEWSPAPER IN SUN VALLEY.
WELL, IF $ 10,000 DOESN'T INTEREST ANY ONE, TRY 20, 50....
1-26
JUST GET RESULTS. BRENDA MUST BE FOUND!
YES, MR. NICKELS.
...BUT SUPERSTITION IS A PRETTY TOUGH NUT TO CRACK.
HE'S JUST WASTING HIS BREATH. HE'LL NEVER FIND ANY ONE AROUND HERE TO GO UP THAT MOUNTAIN!
Walt Messick


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
By Dale Messick
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1946, by The Chicago Tribune.
GOSH, WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME IS SOMETHING OUT OF THE "ARABIAN" NIGHTS"!
HERE I AM AT LAST AT THE BLACK ORCHID FARM....
AND WHAT'S MORE EXCITING, IT WAS THE MYSTERY MAN WHO BROUGHT ME HERE!
....BEFORE THIS DAY IS OVER, I AM GOING TO KNOW WHO HE IS, WHY HE BROUGHT ME HERE, AND WHY HE TOOK LARRY BACK TOWARD THE INN...
MISS STARR, HAVE THE DROPS I PUT IN YOUR EYES RESTORED YOUR SIGHT?
OH, YES!
COME, THEN, I WILL SHOW YOU THE WONDERS AND BEAUTIES OF THE FARM.'
ON THESE DISCS, THE ORCHIDS ARE GROWN.
THE LABORATORY IS IN THIS CHAMBER, WHERE EXPERIMENTS ARE MADE.
EXPERIMENTS FOR WHAT?
DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS! NOW, DOWN THESE STEPS TO THE HEATING PLANT....BLACK ORCHID FARM IS BUILT OVER AN INACTIVE VOLCANO.
THROUGH THESE VENTS THE FUMES RISE TO GIVE THE TROPICAL TEMPERATURE NECESSARY TO GROW THESE RARE FLOWERS.
BUT SUPPOSE THE VOLCANO SHOULD ERUPT?
IT WOULD BE THE END OF OUR GREAT WORK!
WHAT GREAT WORK I WONDER?
SUDDENLY, A PITIFUL CRY IS HEARD THROUGH A MASSIVE DOOR....
LISTEN....I HEAR SOMEONE CRYING!
YOU JUST IMAGINE....
SOB SOB
STOP! DO NOT GO IN THERE!

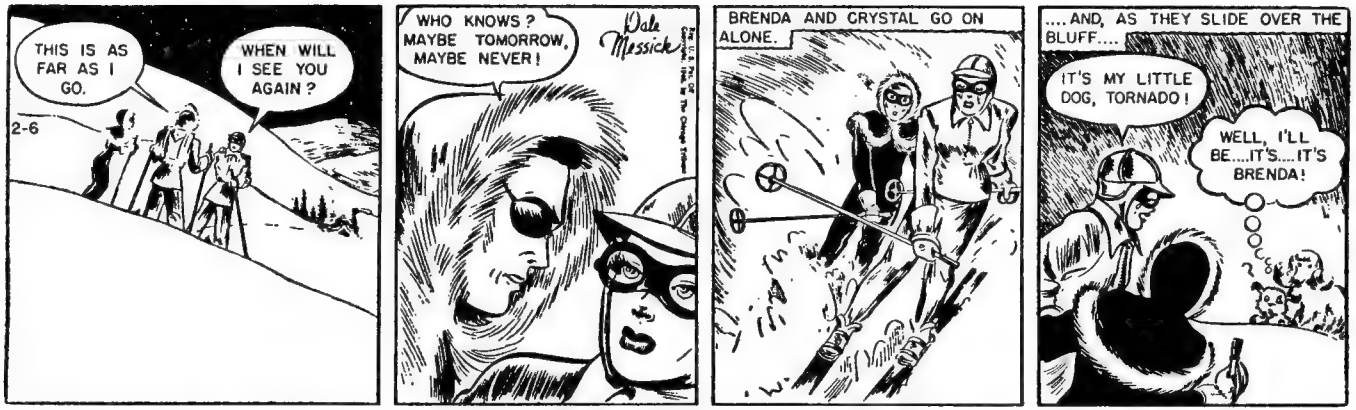
WHILE THE OUTSIDE WORLD WONDERS WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO BRENDA, SHE IS BEING LED THROUGH THE HALLS OF BLACK ORCHID FARM BY AN OLD WOMAN.
VOLCANIC FUMES RISE THROUGH THESE VENTS TO GIVE A TROPICAL TEMPERATURE NECESSARY TO GROW THESE RARE FLOWERS.
1-23
BUT SUPPOSE THIS VOLCANO, THE FARM IS BUILT OVER, SHOULD BECOME ACTIVE?
ALAS! THAT THAT WOULD BE THE END OF OUR GREAT WORK!
Dale Messick
WHAT GREAT WORK?
I CANNOT ANSWER YOU
... JUST AS THEY START UP A FLIGHT OF STAIRS....
SOMEONE'S IN THERE CRYING!
STOP. DO NOT GO IN THERE!
SOB SOB
1-29
DO NOT GO IN THERE!
OH!
MISS STARR, YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE COME IN HERE!
Dale Messick
HOW COULD YOU!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO THIS POOR CHILD?

HOW COULD YOU HURT THIS POOR CHILD ! I.... I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOOD AND KIND. I....
Dale Messick
1-30
NO! NO! IT WAS NOT HE.... IT WAS....
HUSH, CRYSTAL!
IN THERE! IN THERE!!
1-31
IN THERE!
WHO'S IN THERE ?
COME! WE MUST TAKE CRYSTAL TO HER ROOM.
LATER
LET HER REST FOR A FEW HOURS.
.... AND THEN SHE MUST LEAVE BLACK ORCHID FARM FOREVER!
Dale Messick
?

2-1
BRENDA, I WANT YOU TO TAKE CRYSTAL BACK TO SKY-PEAK INN WITH YOU.
OH! MY DEAR. PLEASE SAY YOU WILL TAKE HER!
LATER
GOOD GOSH! INSTEAD OF CLEARING UP THIS MYSTERY, IT'S GETTING MORE AND MORE CONFUSING!
W-W-WHO WAS BACK OF THAT BOLTED DOOR....AND, WHY WAS CRYSTAL CRYING....AND, WHY MUST I TAKE HER AWAY FROM HERE?
Dale Messick
I'M NOT MAKING ANY HEADWAY SOLVING THIS MYSTERY!
2-2
Dale Messick
....AND, IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF THAT MAN! HE'S GOT ME ALL MIXED UP!
I....I CAN'T CONCENTRATE!
THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN...
BRENDA, CRYSTAL IS READY TO RETURN WITH YOU TO SKY-PEAK INN.

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
WHILE ON A TOUR OF BLACK ORCHID FARM, BRENDA DISCOVERS CRYSTAL DISH, A 14 YEAR OLD GIRL WHO HAS JUST BEEN UNMERCIFULLY BEATEN BY.... ???
YOU POOR CHILD, TELL ME....
IT WAS....
NO, CRYSTAL....
WE MUST REMAIN A MYSTERY TO BRENDA STARR.... AND THE WORLD.
I'M TAKING YOU BACK TO SKY-PEAK INN AND CRYSTAL IS GOING WITH YOU.
I WANT YOU TO TAKE HER HOME WITH YOU AND TEACH HER YOUR WAY OF LIFE.
BUT.... I....
PLEASE SAY YOU WILL TAKE ME.... PLEASE GIVE ME A CHANCE TO LIVE LIKE OTHER GIRLS!
.... I HAVE NEVER BEEN AWAY FROM BLACK ORCHID FARM!
HERE IS GOLD ENOUGH FOR ANY ADDED EXPENSE.... A LARGER APARTMENT, PERHAPS.... WHATEVER YOU WILL NEED.
IN ALL MY LIFE I HAVE NEVER SEEN A TREE, OR GRASS.... ONLY ICE AND SNOW.
TAKE ME AWAY FROM HERE, PLEASE!
WELL, ON ONE CONDITION....
TELL ME WHO YOU ARE!

BRENDA CONSENTS TO TAKE CRYSTAL DISH BACK TO SKY-PEAK INN.
....BUT, FIRST YOU MUST TELL ME WHO YOU ARE!
2-4
HERE, IN THIS SMALL PACKAGE, IS THE SECRET OF BLACK ORCHID FARM.
ALSO, THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT ME....
...ONLY UNDER ONE CONDITION MUST YOU OPEN IT!
Walt Massick
IF MY GHARBOO IS NOT FOUND IN ONE HOUR, I'M CALLING MY LAWYER!
MY DEAR MRS. SONUTS...
2-5
WE ARE DOING EVERY-THING POSSIBLE TO FIND YOUR DOG.
GOSH-ALL-FRIDAY, GHARBOO! CAN'T YA BE PATIENT A LITTLE LONGER? WHY....MAYBE BRENDA'S JUST BEHIND THE NEXT BLUFF!
....AND TORNADO WAS RIGHT!
LOOK. IT'S SKY-PEAK INN!


THIS IS AS FAR AS I GO.
WHEN WILL I SEE YOU AGAIN?
2-6
WHO KNOWS? MAYBE TOMORROW, MAYBE NEVER!
Dale Messick
BRENDA AND CRYSTAL GO ON ALONE.
....AND, AS THEY SLIDE OVER THE BLUFF....
IT'S MY LITTLE DOG, TORNADO!
WELL, I'LL BE....IT'S....IT'S BRENDA!
HELLO. YES, THIS IS ABRETHA. WHAT? OH BOY, SAY THAT AGAIN!
2-7
YES, IT JUST CAME IN ON THE TICKER!
BULL
WHAT A RELIEF! SHE'S SAFE!
Dale Messick
LET'S HAVE A REAL HOMECOMING FOR BRENDA! I'LL MAKE ALL THE ARRANGEMENTS.

REALLY, TORNADO, I THINK YOU'RE SIMPLY WONDERFUL THE WAY YOU FOUND MISS BRENDA !
2-8
WELL, STARR, GIVE OUT. WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
DID YOU REALLY FIND THE BLACK ORCHID FARM?
WHO'S THE KID ?
NOTHING DOING, BOYS. I DIDN'T RISK MY NECK GOING UP THAT MOUNTAIN JUST TO HAND OUT A JUICY STORY TO A PACK OF WOLVES!
Dale Messick
LATER
WOLF (WOOLF), N. A CARNIVOROUS ANIMAL....
IT'S TIME LITTLE GIRLS WERE IN BED... I'M YOUR GUARDIAN, AND....
OH, NO.... NOT THAT!
2-9
LET'S JUST PRETEND WE ARE SISTERS.
ALL RIGHT, CRYSTAL. LET YOUR BIG SISTER TUCK YOU IN FOR THE NIGHT.
GOOD NIGHT, MY DEAR. SWEET DREAMS.
.... AND, NOW THAT CRYSTAL IS ASLEEP, I'M GOING TO OPEN THAT PACKAGE !
Dale Messick

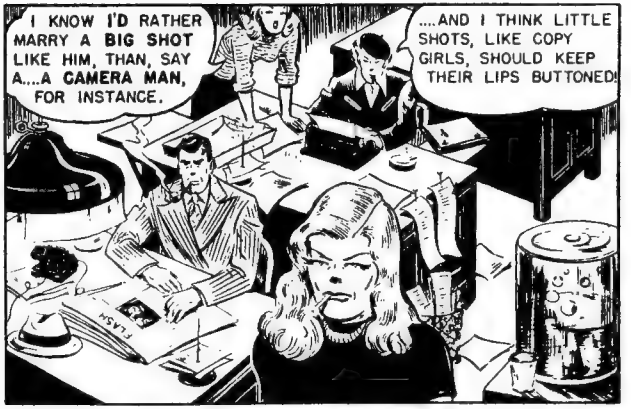
BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
BRENDA IS BACK AT SKY-PEAK INN WITH CRYSTAL DISH.
....AND I STILL DON'T KNOW WHO THE MYSTERY MAN IS!
I WON'T KNOW UNTIL I OPEN THIS SMALL PACKAGE HE GAVE ME.
WHILE CRYSTAL IS ASLEEP, I'M GOING TO DO JUST THAT!
NO! NO! YOU GAVE HIM YOUR WORD YOU WOULD ONLY OPEN IT UNDER ONE CONDITION!
BUT WHEN AM I TO KNOW THAT CONDITION?
YOU WILL KNOW, AND, UNTIL THAT TIME....
I'VE GOT YOU ON MY HANDS.... A STRANGE, MYSTERIOUS CHILD.
OH! CRYSTAL, I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN THAT THE WAY IT SOUNDED. IT....IT'S JUST THAT I WANT TO KNOW WHO HE IS!
STARR FEB 10
IT'S PRETTY TERRIBLE TO BE IN LOVE WITH A MAN WHOSE NAME YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW!
OH! MY DEAREST BRENDA, HE LOVES YOU, TOO.... SO DO I.... BUT, HE CAN NEVER....
MARRY YOU. NEVER!

WHILE CRYSTAL SLEEPS, I'M GOING TO OPEN THIS PACKAGE!
2-11
IN IT IS THE SECRET OF BLACK ORCHID FARM, AND WHO THE MYSTERY MAN IS!
STOP! YOU PROMISED TO OPEN IT ONLY ON ONE CONDITION!
Dale Messick
BUT, HOW WILL I KNOW THAT CONDITION?
YOU WILL I'LL TELL YOU.
BRENDA AND CRYSTAL ARE ON THEIR WAY HOME.
IF IT'S TRUE, CRYSTAL, THAT YOU HAVE LIVED YOUR WHOLE LIFE AT BLACK ORCHID FARM....
2-12
WHERE DID YOU GET SO MANY PRETTY CLOTHES?
HE BROUGHT THEM TO ME.
OH!
IS THAT THE ONLY NAME YOU EVER HAVE FOR THE MYSTERY MAN?
YES.
Dale Messick

AS LONG AS YOU ARE THE ONE TO SAY WHEN I AM TO OPEN THIS PACKAGE, MAYBE YOU SHOULD TAKE IT FOR SAFE KEEPING.
2-13
Dale Messick
OH, NO! I WOULDN'T DARE. HE GAVE IT TO YOU!
GOOD GOSH! I FEEL LIKE A LITTLE KID TRYING TO FIND OUT IF THERE REALLY IS A SANTA CLAUS.
LATER
SHALL WE MATCH PENNIES TO SEE WHO GETS THE LOWER?
LOWER WHAT?
BERTH.
OH, I ASSURE YOU I AM NOT OF LOWER BIRTH!
EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL, CRYSTAL?
2-14
15
I'M AFRAID NOT I'M HAVING DIFFICULTY.
15
Dale Messick
WHAT SEEMS TO BE.... HA! HA!
....IF THE TRAIN DIDN'T JIGGLE SO, I DO THINK I COULD STAY IN!
14

I'M JUST DYING TO KNOW WHAT BIG SURPRISE BRENDA IS BRING ING BACK WITH HER FROM SUN VALLEY!
2-15

GOSH, MAYBE IT'S A HUSBAND! I THINK IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL IF SHE MARRIED LARRY NICKELS.
Dale Messick


I KNOW I'D RATHER MARRY A BIG SHOT LIKE HIM, THAN, SAY A....A CAMERA MAN, FOR INSTANCE.
....AND I THINK LITTLE SHOTS, LIKE COPY GIRLS, SHOULD KEEP THEIR LIPS BUTTONED!
FLASH

THERE SHE IS!
SAY! WHO'S THAT WITH HER?
BET SHE'S THE SURPRISE!
2-16

MISS CRYSTAL DISH, THIS IS MY COUSIN, ABRETHA.... PESKY MILLER....AND OVER HERE, HANK O'HAIR, AND...
Dale Messick

WHERE'S TOM? DIDN'T HE COME?

WELL, WHAT'S THE MATTER? SOMETHING HAPPEN TO TOM, WHILE I'VE BEEN AWAY?
YOU'RE PUTTING IT MILD, BABY!

BRENDA STARR REPORTER
by Dale Messick
THE WHOLE GANG AT THE FLASH HAVE JUST MET BRENDA'S TRAIN FROM SUN VALLEY, EXCEPT....
WHERE'S TOM?
I SUGGEST YOU ASK TOM YOURSELF, BRENDA. HE'S AT THE PAPER.
O.K., ABRETHA. WILL YOU TAKE TORNADO AND MY LUGGAGE BACK TO THE APARTMENT?
CRYSTAL, YOU'D BETTER GO, TOO.... YOU'VE HAD A LONG TRIP.
NOW CAN'T YOU TWO AT LEAST GIVE ME A HINT AS TO WHAT'S HAPPENED TO TOM?
HA! YOU CAN'T FOOL ME WITH YOUR DEAD PAN FACES, I KNOW YOU'VE GOT SOME SURPRISE....
Taxi
I KNOW TOM....DEAR, OLD, FAITHFUL TOM.... HE NEVER CHANGES!
WELL?
ER....A....BRENDA! WELCOME HOME.
TOM, YOU HAVE CHANGED...YOU'RE PALE. WHAT'S HAPPENED?
AREN'T YOU EVEN GOING TO KISS ME HELLO, TOMMY? I'M ALL PUCKERED UP.
COME ON, PESKY. THIS I COULDN'T WATCH!

IF YOU MUST KNOW WHY TOM ISN'T HERE, TOO....YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK HIM YOURSELF....
Dale Messick
2-18
....BECAUSE I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU.
AND THAT GOES FOR ME, TOO!
THIS IS SOME KIND OF A JOKE.... YOU CAN'T FOOL ME. I KNOW TOM TOO WELL. GOOD, OLD, FAITHFUL TOM! HE NEVER CHANGES.
WHILE BRENDA GOES TO THE FLASH, ABRETHA TAKES TORNADO, CRYSTAL, AND THE LUGGAGE TO THE APARTMENT.
WHO IS TOM?
JUST A GUY BRENDA ISN'T GONNA STRING ALONG ANY MORE!
WELL, TOM, NOT EVEN A HELLO KISS FOR YOUR BEST GIRL, JUST BACK AFTER BEING LOST?
2-19
AREN'T YOU GLAD TO SEE ME?
NATURALLY. I'M ALSO ANXIOUS TO HEAR ABOUT THIS BLACK ORCHID FARM,... AND THE MYSTERY MAN.
Dale Messick
TOM, YOU HAVE CHANGED. HERE I AM, ALL PUCKERED UP, AND YOU'RE NOT EVEN INTERESTED!
HE'S INTERESTED, MISS STARR, BUT I DON'T THINK HE'S GOING TO DO ANY-THING ABOUT IT.

TOM, WHAT DOES SLIM NOLAN MEAN.... YOU CAN'T KISS ME?
Dale Messick
2-20
BRENDA, MAY I PRESENT MRS. TOM TAYLOR?
CONGRATULATIONS, TOM..., AND, SLIM, I KNOW YOU'LL BE HAPPY.
2-21
TOM'S SUCH A SWELL....
SKIP IT!
WHILE BACK AT BRENDA'S APARTMENT...
YOU SEE, CRYSTAL, TOM TAYLOR JUST GOT TIRED WAITING FOR BRENDA, SO HE UPPED AND MARRIED THIS SLIM NOLAN.
BRENDA WILL NOT MIND BECAUSE I KNOW SHE IS IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE ELSE.
Dale Messick

PLEASE, SLIM, I SINCERELY WISH YOU EVERY HAPPINESS. I'M GLAD TOM FOUND THE RIGHT GIRL.
2-22
NATURALLY I WAS SURPRISED! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU TWO WERE SEEING EACH OTHER.
Dale Messick
...ONLY I DON'T HAPPEN TO BE THE RIGHT GIRL!
WHAT?
...O.K. I CHOPPED HIM DOWN AT A WEAK MOMENT, BUT HE STILL LOVES YOU!
I KNEW TOM STILL WANTED YOU WHEN I GOT HIM SIGNED ON THE DOTTED LINE.
2-23
THEN, WHY....
WHY DID I DO IT? DO YOU HAVE TO ASK THAT?
I JUST COULDN'T STAND BY, AND DO NOTHING, WHILE YOU GAVE HIM THE RUN AROUND. AT LEAST I CAN LOOK AFTER HIM ... I'D WORK MY FINGERS TO THE BONE FOR THAT MAN!
BRENDA DETECTS A SINCERE NOTE IN SLIM'S VOICE
SHE....SHE REALLY DOES LOVE TOM!
Dale Messick

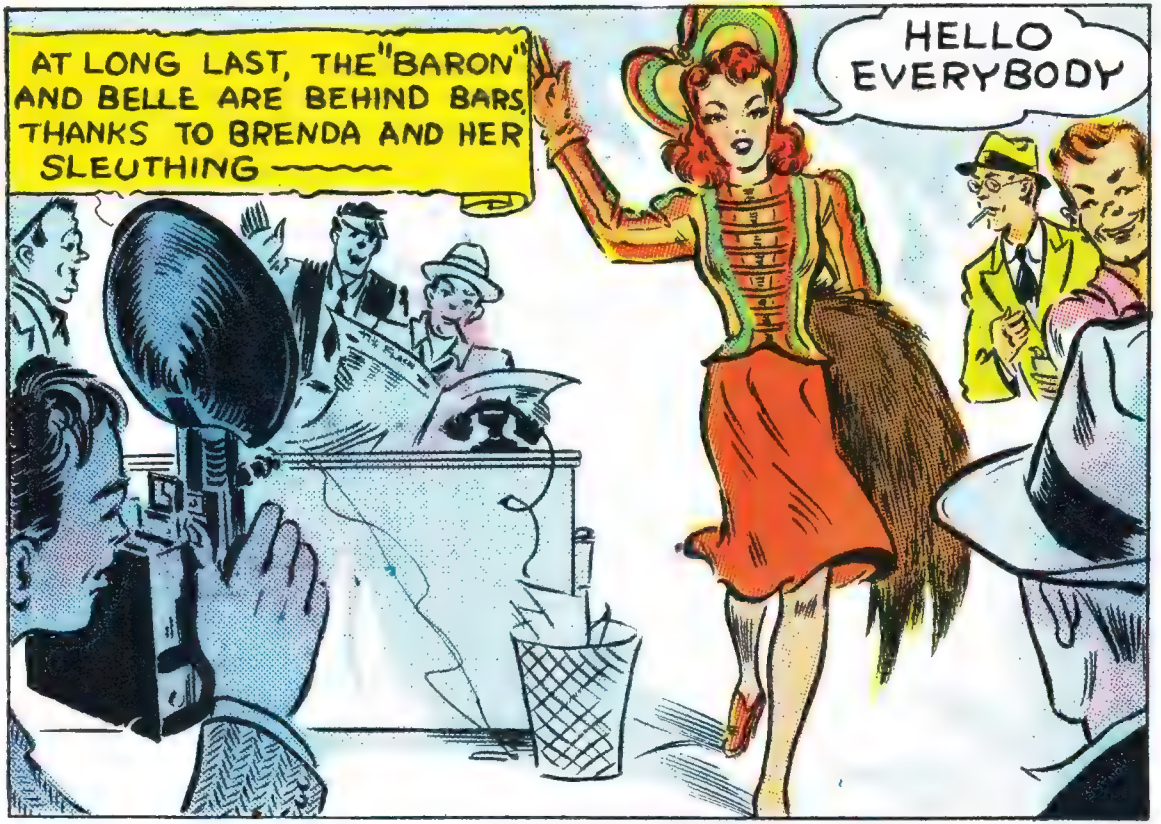
BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
NOW THAT WE ARE THREE, JUST WHO'S GOING TO SLEEP WHERE, AND HOW?
WE ONLY HAVE TWO SINGLE BEDS.... AND I'M NOT GOING TO SLEEP ON THAT DINKY LITTLE LOVE SEAT IN THE LIVING ROOM.
BUT, COUSIN ABRETHA, WE HAVE PLENTY OF MONEY TO GET A LARGER PLACE.
HA! LISTEN TO HER RAVE! BABY, HOUSING IS SO BAD IN THIS TOWN THAT, THE OTHER DAY, SOME GAL K.O'D HER BETTER HALF, AND 60 WOMEN OFFERED TO TAKE THE RAP IF THEY COULD SUBLET HER APARTMENT!
I'LL BE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO SLEEP ON THE LOVE SEAT.
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1948, by The Chicago Tribune
I'LL NEVER FORGET THE TIME I LOST MY BED TO A CAT FROM WYOMING.
TORNADO
WELL, GIRLS, THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO SETTLE THIS SLEEPING BUSINESS!
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO DRAW LOTS!
GOOD NIGHT
GOOD NIGHT
WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT IT?

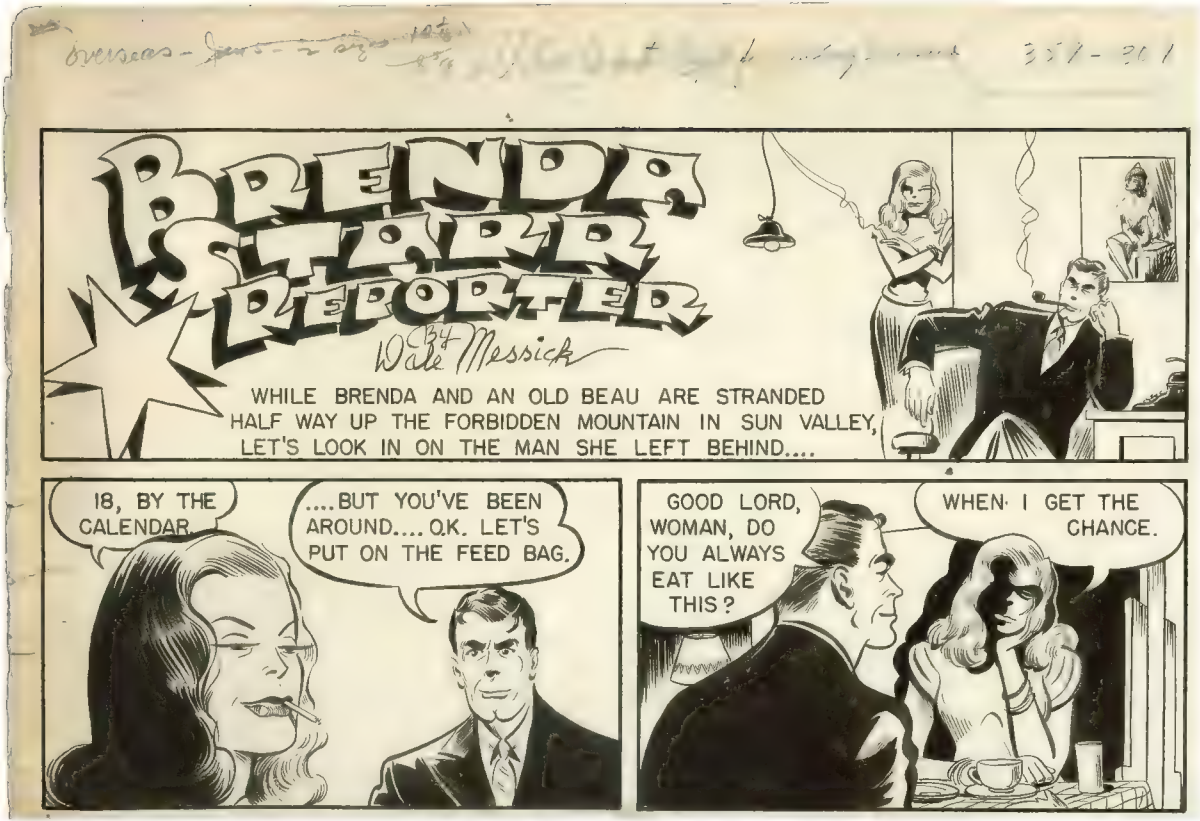
Original Dale Messick artwork of Brenda and Basil from the 1970s.

Process

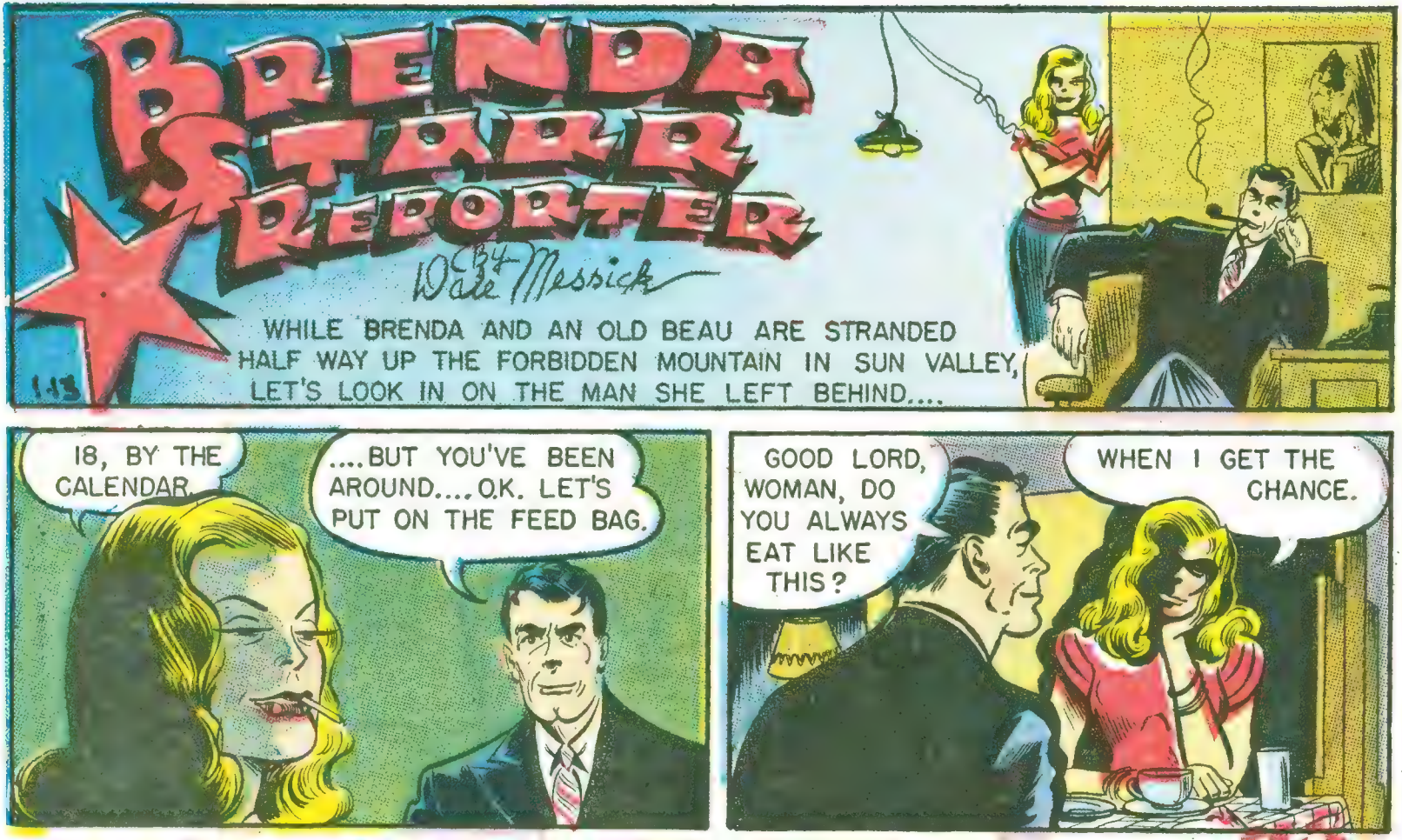
Drawing and Coloring *Brenda Starr*

Creating a comic strip is a much more complicated process than most readers would ever think. A strip starts out with a plot or story outline which is broken down into panels on a piece of art board or paper. After the storyline is set the art is created; first in pencils which are then inked with a pen and/or brush. The first panel above displays the finished, inked artwork for the *Brenda Starr* Sunday strip from October 27, 1940. Presented on the right is what is called a "color guide." As its name implies, it sets the final colors to be used in the printed strip. The color guide above was painted with watercolor on vellum. The opposite page shows the final product. Note that this panel from the strip, found on page 52 of this volume, has not completely benefitted from being fully digitally restored.


AT LONG LAST, THE "BARON" AND BELLE ARE BEHIND BARS, THANKS TO BRENDA AND HER SLEUTHING
HELLO EVERYBODY


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
'34 Dale Messick
WHILE BRENDA AND AN OLD BEAU ARE STRANDED HALF WAY UP THE FORBIDDEN MOUNTAIN IN SUN VALLEY, LET'S LOOK IN ON THE MAN SHE LEFT BEHIND....
18, BY THE CALENDAR.
....BUT YOU'VE BEEN AROUND.... O.K. LET'S PUT ON THE FEED BAG.
GOOD LORD, WOMAN, DO YOU ALWAYS EAT LIKE THIS?
WHEN I GET THE CHANCE.

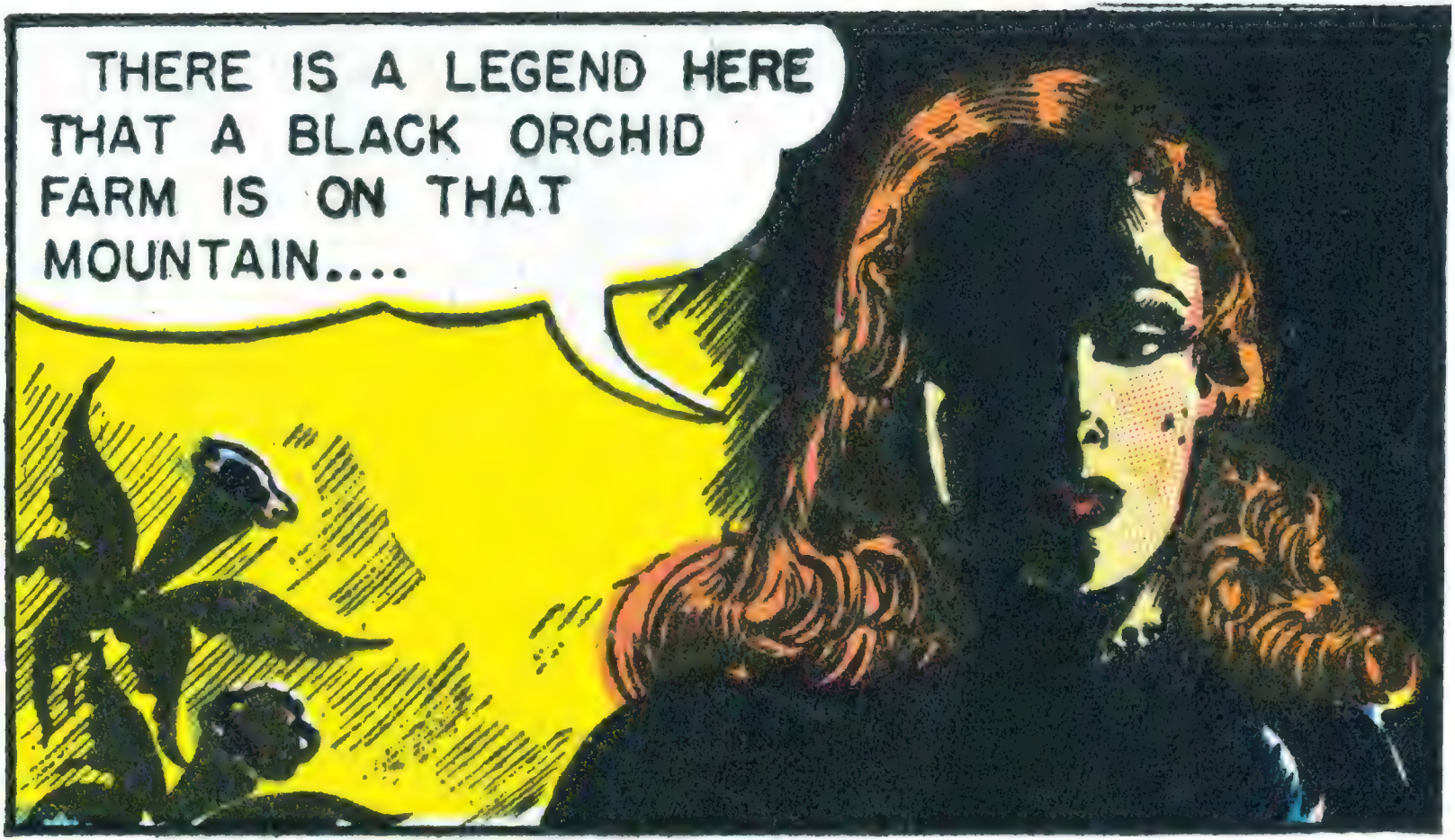
Above: three panels from Dale Messick's original pen and ink artwork for the Sunday *Brenda Starr* strip from January 13, 1946. Opposite page: the same three panels from the printed Sunday page before being fully digitally restored. The entire strip can be found on page 174.


BRENDA STARR REPORTER
Dale Messick
WHILE BRENDA AND AN OLD BEAU ARE STRANDED HALF WAY UP THE FORBIDDEN MOUNTAIN IN SUN VALLEY, LET'S LOOK IN ON THE MAN SHE LEFT BEHIND....
18, BY THE CALENDAR.
....BUT YOU'VE BEEN AROUND....O.K. LET'S PUT ON THE FEED BAG.
GOOD LORD, WOMAN, DO YOU ALWAYS EAT LIKE THIS?
WHEN I GET THE CHANCE.

DO YOU HAVE NEWS OF WHAT BASIL DID WITH OUR BABY?
NO, BUT I DO HAVE A GOOD SUSPICION...
my box
© 1979 by Chicago Tribune-N.Y. News Synd. Inc. All Rights Reserved
®

Above: Dale Messick original pencil artwork from the *Brenda Starr* strip from August 12, 1979. This panel shows Messick's rough pencils laying out the composition. Opposite page: the original artwork for the final inked panel. This panel shows how the rough composition is "tightened" in the inking process. The composition has been fleshed out and fully developed in this final step of the panel's composition.

DO YOU HAVE NEWS OF WHAT BASIL DID WITH OUR BABY?
NO, BUT I DO HAVE A GOOD SUSPICION...
Dale Messick 8-12
© 1979 by Chicago Tribune-N.Y. News Synd. Inc. All Rights Reserved
®


THERE IS A LEGEND HERE THAT A BLACK ORCHID FARM IS ON THAT MOUNTAIN....

Afterword

My "Granny Dale"

From a very young age, I was told that I was much like my gregarious, "nutty" grandma, "Granny Dale." Not only did I draw constantly but I was a born story-teller and would put on "shows" for anyone who was willing to watch.

Granny Dale's life was the opposite of mine. She lived in a beautiful penthouse in Chicago. When I was a little girl, she was still at it — writing and drawing *Brenda Starr, Reporter*. On our yearly visits I can remember her wearing mink coats, boas and being interviewed by a TV crew. All normal for her world. It was the far from anything I'd ever seen. But "glamour" and excitement were part of me, and I'd find those things eventually.

In 1980 my grandmother retired from drawing *Brenda Starr* and moved to Sonoma County to be nearer to us, her only family. This must have been a shock for her, moving from the big city to "the wine country." I got to know my "Granny Dale." She was also the only grandparent who lived a short drive from us. During those years, until she died in 2005, she was very much a part of our small family unit. She was at all my birthday parties, graduations and at as many important events. She was hard on me. She used to say to me "wear mascara, you need it." She was a lot of fun, and inspiring.

In the eighties Dale started working on an autobiography that she called "Still Stripping at 80." Since nothing happened with the book by the early nineties she was ready to re-title it "Still Stripping at 90." There are a lot of good stories stuck in those pages.

She once wanted to be a playwright and when I told her that I had the same ambition the next words out of her mouth were: "How about you write a play about one of my Brenda Starr storylines?" She knew exactly which story too. "There's a junk yard. It would make a great play."

After being admitted into a playwriting MFA program I started to write my grandma's story as a play; I had a feeling that it was something special. Her character, both as Brenda and as Dale just flew off the page. It was strange, but I somehow wasn't surprised

I found letters from C.D. Bachelor, a famous political cartoonist who was my grandma's beau in the late 30's and have discovered a Dalia Messick before she was the first female syndicated cartoonist in America. It's really a wonderful, compelling story of how she made it, in a very male dominated field, back in the day when women just didn't do things like that.

Dale's accomplishments were great, and should not be forgotten. She paved the way for female cartoonists after her, and for female journalists around the world. The play covers all of that. If I learned anything from my daring, funny, talented granny, it's stick with it. If you are talented and determined, you can get there.

—Laura Rohrman

Laura Rohrman is the granddaughter of Dale Messick. A playwright, journalist and actor, she has written and produced over 40 plays, including one about her famous grandmother, *Reporter Girl*. The play is currently in development for a 2012 Off-Broadway production in New York City.

© 1960 by The Chicago Tribune.

8-14

BRENDA STARR REPORTER®

See the world's most famous fictional reporter, role model to scores of aspiring female journalists, *Brenda Starr*, from the beginning! This volume starts with the strip's debut on June 30, 1940, and presents almost a complete year of the feature in brilliant digitally reconstructed color. Also featured in this volume is the first "Man of Mystery" story featuring the introduction of Brenda's love interest, Basil St. John.

Created by Dale Messick, one of the first women to draw and write a syndicated newspaper strip, *Brenda Starr* successfully mixed romance, fashion, and adventure into one of the longest running features in newspaper history. Even though *Brenda Starr* officially ended its syndicated run on January 2, 2011, the feature continues through Hermes Press' reprints of the strip's early years.

Hermes Press is one of a handful of publishers which exclusively produces art books about popular culture. We publish definitive books on such wide ranging subjects as: the art and artists of the comics; cinema and television design; and comprehensive editions of classic newspaper strips and comic books. Visit us at www.hermespress.com.

$60 ISBN 1-932563-80-6
9 781932 563801 56000

E
E
M
P
I
R
SON OF ULTRON